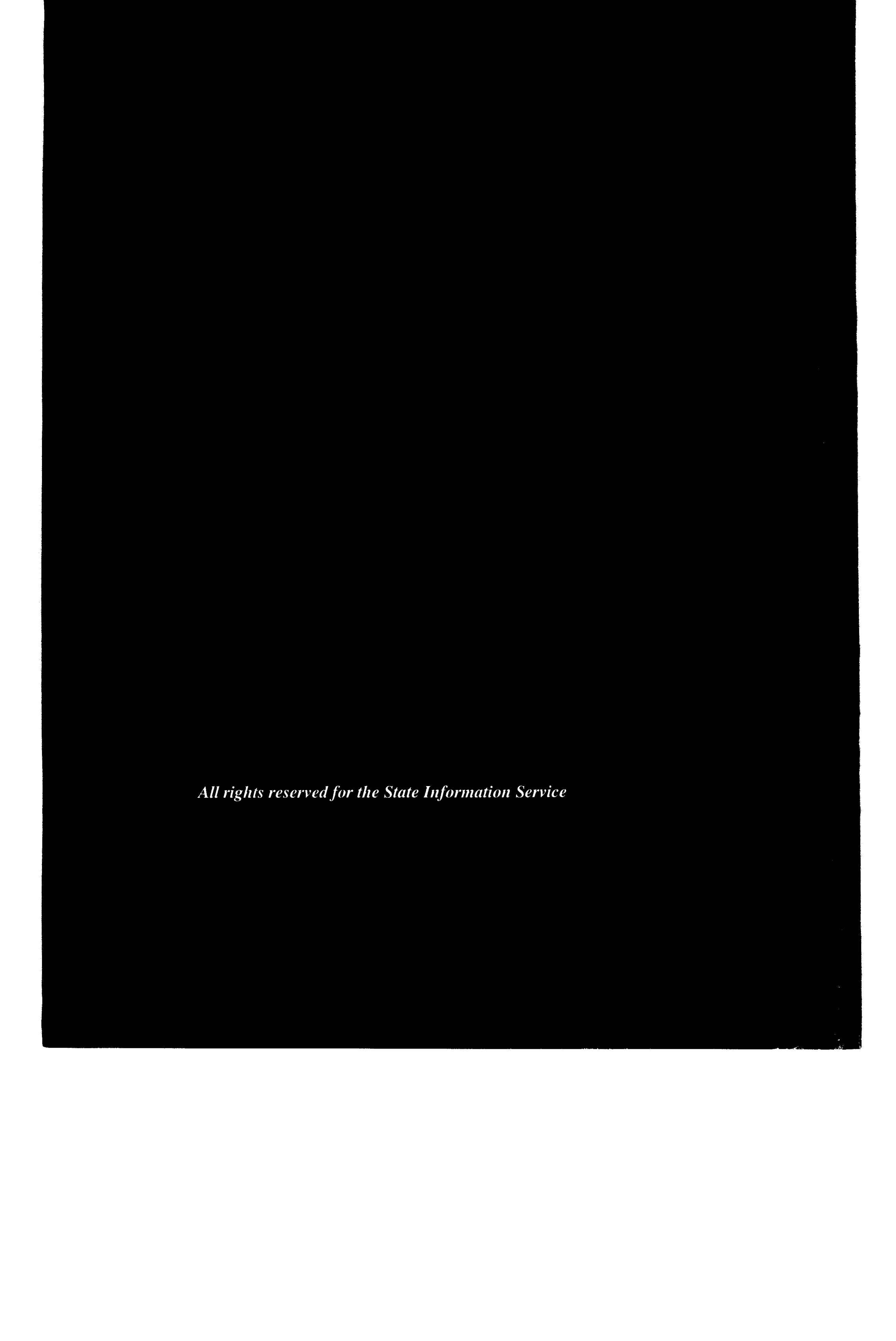
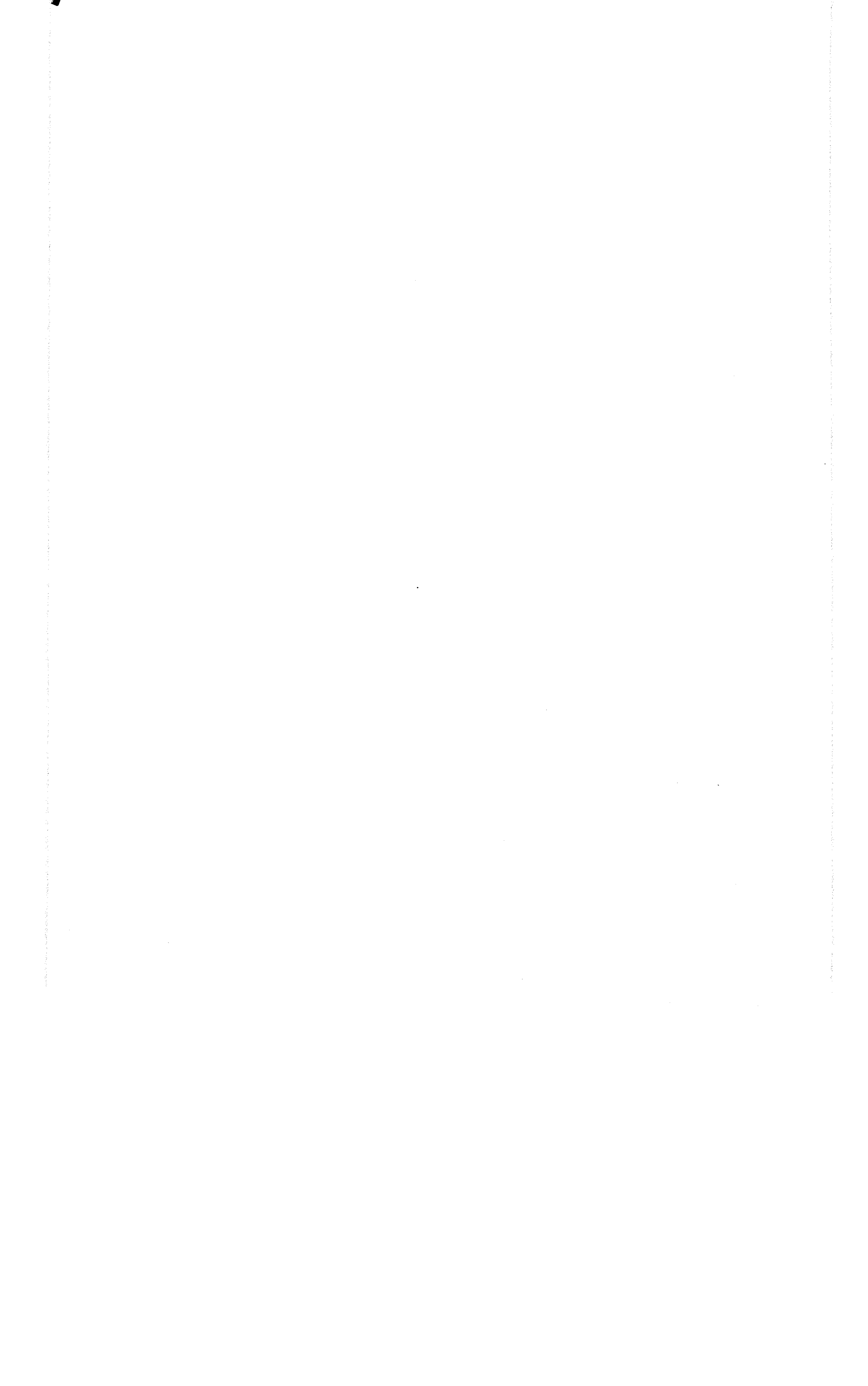


Egyptian Folk Arts

Folk Literature
Music
Art and Handicraft
Habits and Customs



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

published by :
Ministry of Information
State Information Service
22, Talat Harb Str. cairo

Egyptian Folk Arts

This volume is issued
under the supervision of::

Nabil Osman

Prof. Abdul - Hamid Younis
Prof. Nabila Ibrahim
Hassan Osman
Laila Ades

English Issue
Chief Editor: ***Prof. Ali Ezzat***

Editors:
Dr. Kamal Ayad Gad
Dr. Mohammed El - Said Al - Kin
Dr. Mustafa Riad
Dr. Zakaria El - sseify

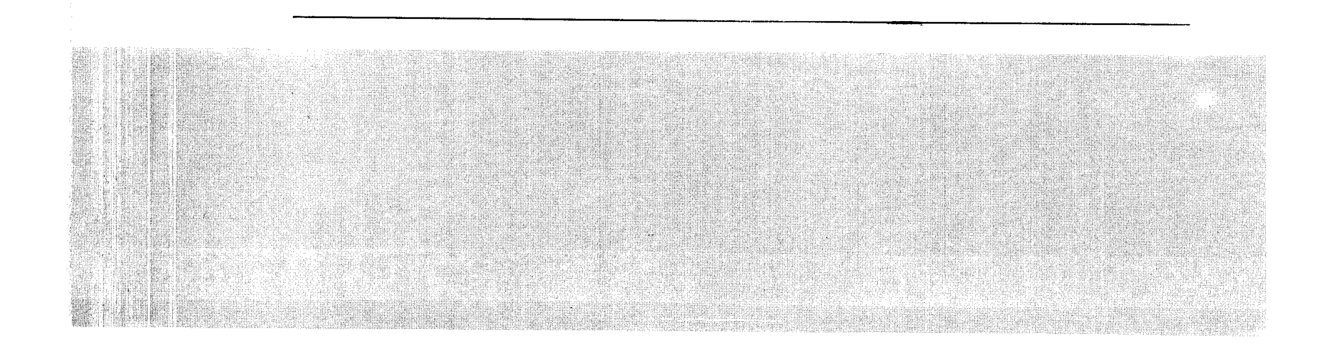
Photography:
Adel Abu Baker
Ahmed El Magraby
Ahmed Korany
Fathy Barakat
Ahmed El Khatib

Design :
Hassan Osman

Lay out : **Hoda Moustafa**

Contents

page



page

Art and Handicraft

Habits and Customs

Message to Dear Reader

BY **Nabil Osman**
Chairman of State Information Service
Cairo

IN our contemporary world that is brimful of modern sciences transmitted by satellites, due attention is given to the collections of popular heritage with a view to acquainting people with the customs and traditions of the various countries, or at least conducting a dialogue between the spirit of these (countries) and that of the present age.

This attention has resulted in the awareness of preserving the popular arts , classified and documented. Some scholars may provide academic evidence for their heritage, some others may compile encyclopaedic works for the classification and organization of this heritage .

THIS book has been prepared with the intentien of familiarizing the reader with the Egyptian spirit that has a unique personality whose roots extend back to the dawn of history.

Those who contemplate the Egyptian popular life across history will feel the keenness of the Egyptian people on sticking to their customs, traditions and manners, which may be called Egyptian originality.

In the meanwhile, these people look forward to more progress through gettting in touch with what goes around them in the outer world , which may be called contemporaneity .

THE present book, issued in English, French and German by State Information Service , Ministry of Information in Egypt, is a step in the direction of introducing our popular heritage to the readers of these languages for the purpose of acquainting them with the essence of the Egyptian personali-

ty and its civilized role in our new world, the global age, and confirming its original values that are still persuading Egyptian people towards progress and construction .

***There** are no better means for introducing this Egyptian identity than presenting illustrated samples of our folk arts and shedding light on their historical dimensions through the records and classification preserved in the Folk Arts Centre - established in 1957 - research centres at the Academy of Arts, Egyptian Universities, Geographical Society Museum, and field visits to Egyptian houses in villages and towns in the various governorates . These visits have been made by scholars specialized in different domains.*

***IT** may be noticed that the Egyptian house has not only been a mere place for love and life or a mere symbol of familiarity and friendship, but it has also been a sanctuary for art.Every day preoccupation and practices have never been an obstruction in the way of artistic creativity but they have been the means of realizing the dream of producing innumerable artistic works that fulfil the requirements of life from birth to death .*

The good of the earth like ivory, wood, cotton, and metals such as copper, silver and gold have been shaped by hands

that are furnished with the wisdom of art to serve life, in accordance with mathematical precision that reveals familiarity and favourable interaction with the nature of the environment. All these are expressed in words, melodies, riddles, stories and myths that reflect the joy of life that is as glowing as sunlight. We come also across variations in handling these arts that differ from one village to another, and from one region to the other; arts that enrich the souls and rejoice in their victory over the hardships and harshness of life.

***THROUGH** perusing the topics of this book, the reader is acquainted with Egyptian arts that are old as well as modern. They are similar to layers of deposits that are piled one on the top of the other. Though each deposit belongs to one of the historical epochs, yet they all form one coherent mass.*

***WE** hope that, after this introduction, the book will be to your satisfaction and of much benefit to you, dear reader.*

Nabil Osman

FOLK LITERATURE

● MYTH IN POPULAR TRADITION ● FOLKLORE IN ANCIENT EGYPT ● FOLKLORE IN THE MEMELUKE AND OTTOMAN ERAS ● EGYPTIAN FOLK LITERATURE



MYTH IN POPULAR TRADITION

BY Prof. Abdul-Hamid Younis



The fact that myth is closely related, in daily use, to the supernatural deeds that exceed reality and reason, is indicative of its originality, and this may be traced by scholars in some concepts, practices and traditions. The term "Ustoorah" has been referred to by Westerns as "myth" .When we deal with myth we refer to that subject which has attained the status of an autonomous discipline.Therefore, we have started to recognize the significance of this discipline and the importance of its scientific study. However, it is worth mentioning that the term "mythology" refers to that autonomous discipline and that it has been established in the western languages to the extent that it refers to both the subject and discipline simultaneously. Myths are most often classified in terms of nationalities and civilizations, and Babilonian, Assyrian and Egyptian mythologies are published under titles using the term "mythology"such as Babilonin,Assyrian"mythology"and Egyptian mythology,and so on .

It is needless to give a final word regarding the controversy among scholars on the definition of "myth".However,it is sufficient to mention the specialists'latest agreed-upon definition of myth,namely a tale of a god or demigod,or a supernatural creature which is interpreted according to primitive man's logic. Moreover,he who has trodden the path of

ancient civilization during its early phases,will notice that the phenomena of life,nature,universe.social system and knowledge priorities-which are interpreted in terms of personification,incarnation and representation -subsume the word,movement,gesture and tempo and even the formulation of material.

The history of ancient Egypt is abundant in such prominent natural components which man has encountered mythically during those epochs. Most important among these components is the"sun"which has imposed itself on every description of Egypt, as "it keeps shining all day long the year round and whose eye hardly sleeps. Hence, the ancient Egyptians sanctified it and observed its rotation. They also used the sun in making times during the day, night and seasons which resulted in one of the most accurate calenders."Remnant traces of the mythical concept of the sun still exist in some Egyptian festivities and traditions. For instance,the rays of the sun are drawn on the feast pies,and the children throw their recently pulled out teeth in the eye of the sun while singing: Oh,shining sun,take the buffalo's tooth and give the bride's tooth.

The mythical symbols are focussed on the god"Ra"the god of the sun and the world in the city which refers to that planet,namely the city of the sun known subsequently to the Greeks as Heliopolis in northern Cairo.Ra was widely worshipped in Ancient Egypt for quite a long time.In the city of the sun Ra was symbolized by Memphis Ox and was also the chief god among some sacred groups in Ancient Egypt.The sacred tree that was also related to the sun existed there in the city of the sun.Ra is regarded as the creator of human beings in the Ancient Egyptian myth.Among the important deeds of Ra is when he seated himself on "Noot"(heaven) which converted herself into the great heavenly cow that contains the heavens reigned by "Ra".

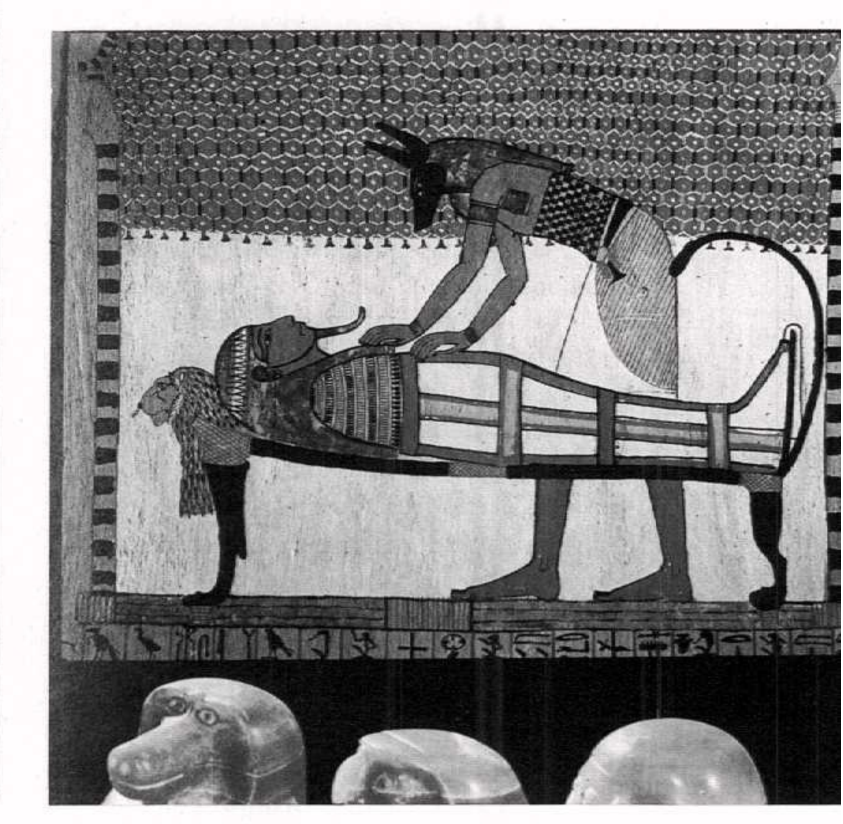
This concept that was diagnosed by Ancient Egyptians as a natural phenomenon which laid stability in that area and provided life with fertility was correlated with the Nile.This led to a wider diagnosis of the sun as to include the Nile,i.e. the river which invaded the desert.Thus,the divine ocean that was crossed by the god of the sun resembled Pharaoh's crossing of the Nile in a canoe.Scholars of this mythical concept may trace the stages of the ancient sun belief and they may find out the correlation between this concept and the numerous symbols which were closely connected with human life such as personification and incarnation.James Henry Breasted,a well-known archaeologist,states:"It is most likely that the oldest picture of the god of sun,as conceived by the ancient Egyptain,dates back to the prehistoric era where the Egyptians used to live on fishing in the Delta region.That was when they imagined the god of the sun as a fisherman paddling on his boat which looked like a canoe made of two big heeps of reeds in order to cross the swamps.Drawings of such old concept are still preserved inside the pyramids,where the god of the sun is depicted in similar drawings .Ra or the winged sun-described by the ancient inhabitants of the Nile valley as a human being-was settled in Heliopolis(Ain shams)in order to replace an older god of the sun called "Atom "who became the greatest god in Egypt."

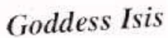
Myth-as mentioned earlier - used the word,gesture,tempo and matter formulation in the act of supplication in worship, which led mythologists to regard myth as the origin of all arts and sciences.Myth used to personify gods as kings and depict kings as god-like.

Egyptologists have come across some documentary papyri containing something like a serial about the rituals of the belief pertaining to the god"Ptah".

The dialogue in this serial shows supplication by acting in the Ancient Egyptian







Goddess Isis

mythology,and the correlation between supplication and the beginnings of philosophical contemplation is indicative of the development of Egyptian mythology .

Until the present day we refer to the area where the sun mythology sprang as "Ain shams" (eye of the sun) which gives emphasis to symbol in the mythologyical structure. Among the well - known examples of these symbols is drawing the sun as an "eye" which is man's tool and ability to visualize things and obtain knowledge .The "eye" symbol developed throughout the stages of ancient history , and had always reflected the divine supervision of man's actions and situations . Thus , we notice that the chief god's eye was the greatest goddess of the universe in the ancient Egyptian mythology . Furthermore , the myth relates that the eye of the chief goddess started in the prime water of universe in response of the chief god in search of his two sons "shu" and "Tefnut ". On her return she found another eye replacing her in the chief god's face , which explains her anger that indicates a turning - point in the universe , because the eye could never be appeased . As a result , the god converted it into a cobra to protect him and keep away his enemies .

Consequently , the sun has two denotations , namely symbolizing the Royal House and the shining and burning sun , simultaneously .The Nile comes second among the components of

Egyptian character . The Nile was correlated with the great change that changed Egypt in old ages from the primitive state to agricultural stability . This great change is represented in the myth of "Isis , Osiris and Horus " which is one of the most well - known world mythologies . It is worth mentioning that this myth was transmitted from Egypt to the peoples of the old world , particulary . Greece . Moreover, names of the heroes of this myth were changed into Greek names . The original names of the Egyptian myth are "Eiz , Ozir . Hur . Seth and Nift "This myth , its characters and symbols are still admired by the world , as is illustrated in literature .During the modern state the Pharoes used to address Ozir " in their prayers as follows : " Thou art the Nile . indeed , great in the fields at the beginning of seasons . People and gods live on they dew." Thereupon , the Nile was associated with fertility and life since it is closely related to water . Thus . Ozir became a personification and incarnation of water . Breasted stated that there is evidence of the close relationship between Ozir and agricultural fertility . He states :This fact can be substantiated by a hymn dating back to the 12th century B.C. It did not only unify " Ozir " with the soil but with the entire earth .

. This integral myth symbolizes a wide - ranging outlook of the universe and nature . The first stage of this myth , as related by Plutarch , argues that " Nut" the goddess of heaven betrayed her husband " Ra" by having an affair with " Seb", the god of earth .When Ra found out this betrayal , he got enraged and cursed her and ordered that she must not get rid of her pregnancy . But "Seb " using sneaky ways , begged to save his mistress " Nut". Thus , he could take from the moon the seventy sixth part of each day so as to save five days , and added them to the ancient Egyptian calender year which had only 360 days . This is the mythological origin which explains the five days which are added to the Egyptian year in order to match the solar calender

In so doing . " Nut " was saved from the curse of " Ra " and gave birth to " Ozir " on the first of the five days .and gave birth to "Hur " the senior on the second day , and "Seth" on the third . and " Eiz " and " Nift " on the fourth and fifth days . respectively . "Ozir" married his sister " Eiz " and " Seth "married his sister " Nift ".

The same myth also relates that thanks are due to Ozir who taught the Egyptians growing wheat , corn and barley , which gained him people's love to the extent that they ranked him with gods . This made his brother "Seth" envy him and concocted a plot with some of his accomplices to get rid of Ozir . Seth made an exquisite coffin to the size of Ozir and invited him to a banquet . While the guests were merry making and clapping their hands , Seth declared a certain contest in which the one whose body suits the size of this exquisite coffin would be the winner of this coffin. The guests competed to win the coffin . and then came Ozir's turn to try the coffin . When Ozir reluctantly jumped into the coffin . the accomplices in the plot covered the coffin tightly and poured liquid lead on the cover and threw it into the Nile . When Isis knew about this conspiracy . she cut a lock of her hair . wore the mourning attire and set out crying in search of her husband's body . She was advised by the god of wisdom to go to the papyrus swamps and take seven scorpions with her. Later on ,she gave birth to a son Horus junior , but the son was bitten by a scorpion and then died - Isis begged the god "Ra" to save her soon from the claws of death . Ra answered her request and sent Toot to teach her a charm which saved young Horus from death .

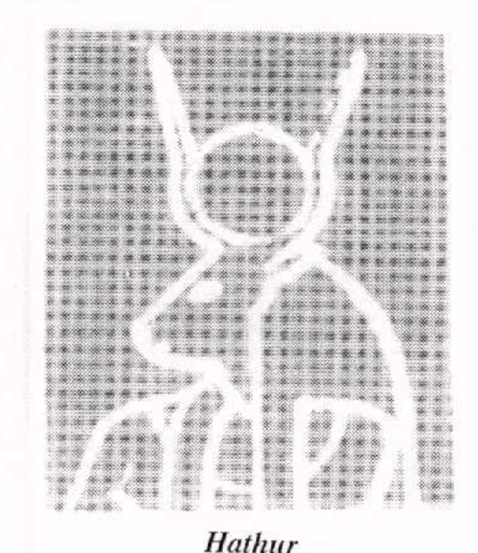
The Nile carried the coffin to the sea and was driven by waves to the coast of Biblos in Syria . There sprang a magnificent tree which swallowed the coffin . When the king of that region saw that tree , he ordered his men to cut it and make two posts , but he did not know that the coffin was inside this large tree .

After painstaking efforts , Isis reached Biblos and sat beside a well weeping and crying . She kept silent . When the queen's maids approached her , she combed and plaited their hair and sprayed them with some pleasant scent from her divine body . When the queen was informed of that story , she sent for the lady and made her a foster mother for her baby.

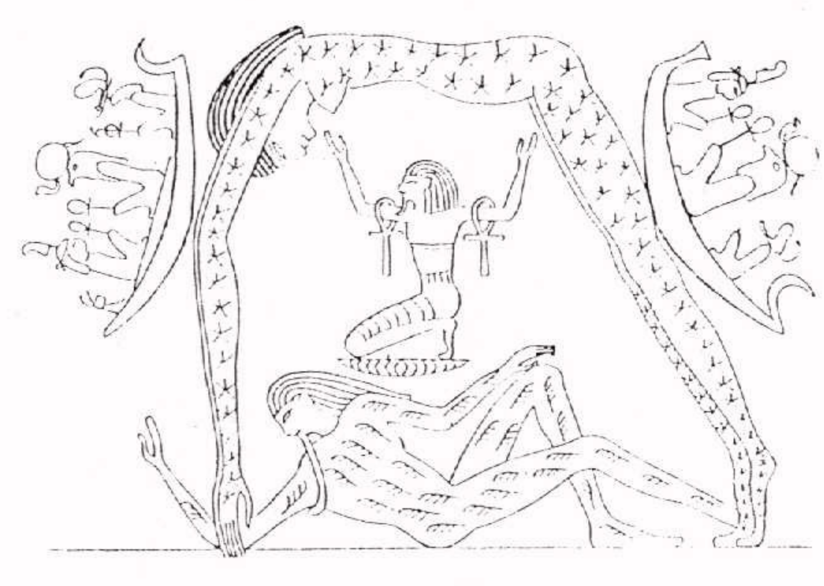
Afterwards , Isis told the queen the truth about the coffin inside the post and begged for obtaining it . Thus , Isis was granted her wish and returned to Egypt with this valuable treasure .

In Egypt Isis laid the coffin and set out in search of her son "Hor" in the city of "Boto". In the meantime , "Seth " was chasing a wild boar when he came across his brother's coffin and tore his corpse into fourteen parts and scattered them in different places.

Isis set out for another journey in search of the parts of her husband's corpse. She took a boat made of papyrus, the fact which explains why crocodiles do not harm those who sail on boats made of papyrus. It was believed that the crocodiles avoided the goddess " Isis" and feared her rage. Isis began to bury every part of the corpse and it is said that she also buried a statue of her husband in every city so as to make people worship him, and at the same



Hathur



Goddess Nut, the Goddess of Heaven in the shape of a woman

time mislead Seth from finding the real tomb of her husband.

There is an important inscription in Dandarah temple listing the parts of Ozir's corpse. It shows that his heart is buried in Atharbees, his spinal cord in Boseer, his neck in Liteolise and his head in Memphis.

While Ozir personifies the sun, the Nile and fertility, Isis is first and foremost a personification of human life.

Some Egyptologists think that Isis was originally an autonomous goddess, but the myth shows that she was a positive character who had a role in concealing any trace of her husband's corpse until she became able to discover his corpse and regain it. Isis was the main character which is associated with wailing and lamenting the dead in all rituals. She was also a witch curing the patients and giving life to the dead.

The Egyptians have always kept a certain mythological ritual for a long time regarding the celebration of the Nile flood . El-Makrizy relates that the Egyptians - before the Arab conquest of Egypt - used to sacrifice a beautiful girl on that occasion, who was known subsequently as the Bride of the Nile . The purpose was to get a flood sufficient to fertilize the soil, this ritual was banned by the Arabs after their invasion of Egypt during the rule of Omar Ibn El-Khattab as that was a false fable.

Some specialists in Egyptology wonder if the Egyptians have been influenced by the wailing of Isis for her husband to the extent that the Egyptian folkloric legacy has some mourning rituals such as wailing, lamenting and clapping one's face. They also wonder if the Egyptians inclination to mourning and grief had a role in depicting Isis in that loyal character who expressed her parting with her husband in that manner.

The eclipse of the moon is another Egyptian myth which explains that Horus is struggling with Seth, god of Evil, because the former usurped the throne from him. One evening while the moon was full Horus went out and a black cloud hid the face of the moon and thus his eye was hurt. "Seth" was accused of hurting Horus's eye. But the Ancient Egyptians believed that Horus had two eyes, namely the sun and the moon, and when it became dark as a result of the eclipse, the god of the sun brought back the left eye (the moon) to Horus so as to end this eclipse. This has given rise to the Egyptian ritual of beating the drums and metal containers during the eclipse of the moon.

FOLKLORE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

By Prof. Nabila Ibrahim



It is likely that the term "folklore" was foreign to the legacy of civilization in Ancient Egypt, because we are used to relating the mythologies which resulted from the deeply-rooted belief of Ancient Egyptians. This belief is reflected in the extended inevitable relationship between their worldly and heavenly lives. However, if mythologies constitute the formal religious substance as they are closely associated with belief, on the one hand, and with the Pharonic government system, on the other, it is this folkloric substance that still lives with people. It expresses people's values and culture as much as it expresses their hopes and aspirations. In other words, the folkloric substance of a certain people determines their identity and personality as much as it determines the degree of their culture.

How can we get access to the folkloric substance which lived with Ancient Egyptians after thousands of years? How can we reach this substance through hundreds of books and sources that are rich in Egyptian civilization of all sorts and dimensions ?

Work on this field should be based on the possibility of extracting the folkloric substance from the folding of this tremendeous civilization. Besides, sorting out the folkloric forms is a painstaking process, as the mythological substance imposes itself on many forms of the folkloric expression. On the other hand, we cannot impose our taxonomy of the

literary folkloric forms which have become well-established nowadays.

Despite these difficulties, the one who has original awareness of the substance of folkloric legacy may have the ability to separate the folkloric substance from the formal mythological substance. This does not imply that this substance was not common to everybody in the sense that it was not folkloric, since it is, above all, created by the group not by the individual. But the folkloric substance differs from the mythological substance in that the former changes with the collective thought, which varies its tales and thoughts, while the latter is characterized by stability - as it is closely associated with belief.

Folklore usually arises from a belief in the power of the word, and from the ability to move it along various levels: symbolic, connotative, and social. Ancient Egyptians used to believe in the power, magic and ability to move the minds. This can be illustrated by the following extract:

" Man dies and becomes a rotten corpse, and so does his offspring, but his books commemorate him. Thus, one book is more useful than a furnished home or an exquisite palace or even a memorial in a temple."

In another extract, Pharaoh, the king, addresses his minister Ptah -Hutub asking him to provide good education for his son:

" First teach him speech ..... I want him to be like great men's children. Teach him to be obedient, to get every wise opinion, as there is no boy who can understand on his own. "

The mind, according to Ancient Egyptians, as expressed by the great Egyptologist, Dr.Selim Hassan, was synonymous to the heart, and the tongue in their language means nothing but the spoken word. Moreover, the tongue turns the thoughts of the mind (heart) into real facts and provides significance to everything. . Consequently, man obtains his value out of the mind (heart), and the tongue (the spoken word) . The word which is uttered in response to the mind's order distinguishes those who say what they like from those who say what they dislike. Thus, if the word had such effectiveness for Ancient Egyptians, the proverbs which take the from of tales and wisdom are addressed only to those who used to be taught, since their childhood, to listen attentively to others. This gave rise to the great repertoire of literary texts which have been found on the remnants of Ancient Egyptians or inscribed on stone or papyrus. These texts show that speech was passed in the form of tales, wise sayings and songs until Herodotus arrived in Egypt and recorded them in his famous book: **Herodotus Talks About Egypt .**

Narratives constitute the greatest portion of these tales , since they satisfy a basic psychological need for people. The first type of narrative is more advanced than mythology, as the latter depicts gods in a stable manner and gives them their distinctive shape and function. When a myth was formulated about any god, it was meant to serve in establishing justice and supporting good against evil. Mythological tales, on the other hand, exaggerate the deeds of gods and make them similar to the deeds of human beings.

Let us read this mythological tale recorded by Herodotus in his book as expressed by Egyptians :

" There is another sacred bird called the Phoenix which I only saw in pictures. It rarely visits this country, nearly every 500 years, according to the tale of the people of Heliopolis. This visit takes place after the death of this bird's father. Some of its feathers are red and golden. It is similar to the eagle in shape and size. It is related that this bird leaves the land of the Arabs carrying its father to the temple of the sun, to bury him there after covering his body with a layer of colocynth. This takes the following steps; first, the bird makes an egg from colocynth light enough to carry. Then

once he could carry the egg, he empties the egg and puts his father inside it. Then he covers the egg with colocynth once again. Then he carries his father to the temple of the sun in Egypt."

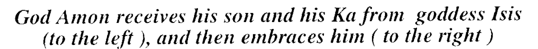
Dr.Ahmed Badawi gives the following comment on this tale: "We used to call this bird Al-Ankaa, but its Egyptian name is "Bino". It is most likely that this name was derived from the Egyptian verb "Wein" meaning (shine, glitter or lighten). Accordingly, this name means (the Twinkling).

The Ancient Egyptians knew the obelisks and took them as symbols of the sun, and gave them tapering peaks similar to those of the pyramidal stone which they called "Bin Bin" They covered these obelisks with gold and silver alloys so they could shine when the sun rose.

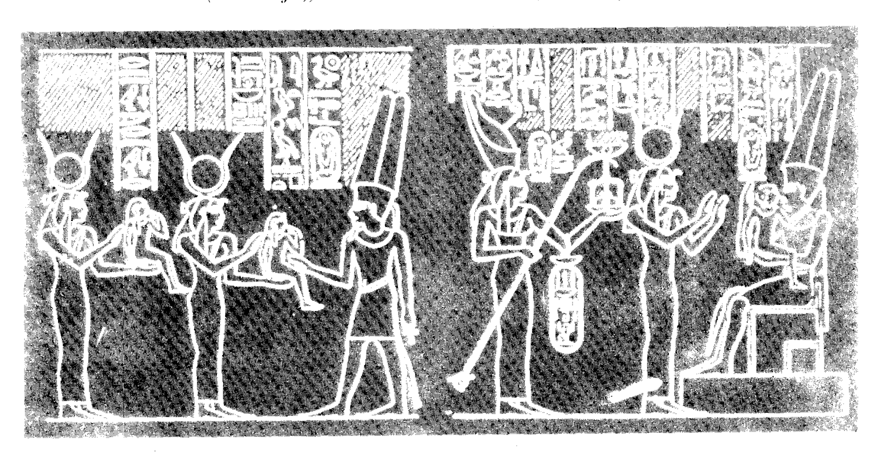
It follows that this bird represented both "light" and "word" which form together the concept of old eternal power. The rationale behind the interest of this bird to bury his father in the temple of the sun in Egypt is that Egypt stands for the origin of "light" and "word", because it was the place that spread light and thought inside and outside the country. This sacred land was supposed to be guarded against evil coming from abroad.

The Nile was the power overruling the resources of the country and securing their continuity forever even if it yielded less water in some seasons. Unfavourable consequences were the due punishment for those who were unable to recognize the hidden secrets behind the flow of the great Nile. It happened once that king Firous, who succeeded his father Sisostrees, got furious because the Nile gave a huge flood which inundated the fields. Firous threw a spear and hit the Nile in his whirlpools. The result was that the king was instantly hurt in his eyes and remained blind for ten years. Then revelation came to him and told him that the period of punishment was over.

It is evident that the Egyptian's love and re-



God Amon receives his son and his Ka from goddess Isis (to the left), and then embraces him (to the right)



spect for his country was the subject of many narratives . Those narratives were related until after the Islamic conquest of Egypt. It is true that this respect was mainly due to the fact that the land and the Nile provided Ancient Egyptians with everlasting security and welfare.

Tales of dangerous floods exist in the history of many nations. These floods have always been ascribed to the conflicts among gods at the expense of man who became the scapegoat. Despite the differences among these tales, they all agree that floods drowned all human beings except a man and a woman who procreate the human race. However, the Pharaonic tale about the flood differs totally from all others regarding its results.

" Isis was a wise and cunning woman as compared to men and gods. Ra used to enter heavens daily to sit on the throne of the horizons. Sacred dotage made his mouth water on to the ground. Isis gathered the dust that mixed with this saliva and shaped it like a big serpent. The serpent did not move like a real one , but it went along the road that was usually used by the great god and bit him. The god cried and his lips and limbs trembled because of the effect of the poison."

" When the god restored his heart, he called his followers: come along , you who came from my body to this world - I want to relate what happened to me. I was bitten by something evil which I could not see or touch. It was something I did not create. I am a prince and son of a prince . I am great and so was my father who invented my name. I have various names and shapes . My parents gave me my name which remained hidden in my body since I was born so that no magician could have any influence upon me. "

" Then Isis went to see him . Her advice was the breath of life and her words kept diseases away. She asked : 'what happened'? 'what happened'? Then she said to Ra : 'what is your name? you sacred father, because the man whose name is cited in an incantation is bound to live forever. Ra replied : " I am the one who created the ox for the cow , hence the existence of the father. I am also the creator of heavens and the secrets of horizons. I am the one who opened his eyes to create light and closed his eyes to give darkness to this world. The Nile flows in my name and gods do not know my name . I created the fire of life to provide work."

Isis answered Ra :

" your name is not among the ones you have just said. Tell me your name so I can get the poison out of your body, Ra whispered his name to Isis and asked her to inform her son Horus with his name. Thus, the great god disclosed his name to goddess Isis. Then Isis said : " you, poisonous liquid, come out of Ra 's body, and you Hor's eye, come out of the god. Come down to the earth , you strong poison. "Thus, Ra lived and the poison died.

The focus of these events is the search for the real name of "Ra" which Isis was trying to find out. It should be noted that Isis did not take any measure except when she saw his mouth water , then she realized with her insight that life may come to an end unless Ra confides his essence in any successor. Thus, Isis was pleased when Ra disclosed his secret which is the secret of existence and life. When Isis passed this secret to her son Horus, she cried : "Ra is alive and the poison is dead.

While these tales still revolve around mythology, the tales to follow belong to another type which people worldwide have always related, namely the legendary tales. This type guides us to the art of narration in the Pharonic legacy and reveals many features, concepts and beliefs of the Egyptian people which exist in their everyday life.

Legendary tales are characterized by the lack of the atmosphere of gods and normal people and life, despite the atmosphere of magic and superstitions.

Two major tales have contributed to the art of narration which spread subsequently and became very prominent in the Arabian Nights. The First tale relates that king Cheops was sitting one evening chatting with his sons. Each son started to relate a strange tale. Prince Chephren said : " I will relate to your Majesty a legend that took place during the rule of your father, Nibka " .

The tale is about the chief chorister during the rule of king "Nibka" . The chief chorister's wife used to betray him with a civilian, but the husband used his magic power in moulding a crocodile statue and put soul in it in order to arrest his wife's lover while going to take a bath.

King Cheops gave the following remark on that tale : " Let a thousand loaves of bread and one hundred pitchers of beer and two measures of incense and an ox be given away to the name of king "Nibka". Let also a pie, a pitcher of beer and cutlet of meat and a measure of incense to the name of the chief chorister. ""

Then Prince "Bufra" related a tale that happened during the reign of king "Sneifru" .

" One day Sneifru felt bored and depressed, so one of his men offered this advice : " Go to the lake of the great house, take a boat full of virgins in front of your palace, then you shall feel pleased when you see them paddling the boat to and fro. You shall also feel happy when you watch the beautiful places around the lake ".

The king followed that man's advice and took a boat with twenty virgins. While the king was merry- making , he noticed that one of the virgins had stopped paddling the boat. She was looking eagerly into the water, as if she had dropped something in it. When the king asked her why she stopped suddenly, she replied that she dropped some ornament that was dear to her. He assured her that he would offer her another one, but she insisted that the boat be stopped until she could find her ornament. The king asked the chief chorister to recite some incantation after which the water split and the ornament was found and then the water came back to normal.

Prince "Hurdadif" related his tale as follows : " So far you have listened to examples of old magicians' tales, some of which are true and others are false. However, there is a real magician living nowadays." The king asked who that magician was. Hurdadif replied :

"There is a civilian called "Diddy" who lives in Did-Snifru. He is one hundred and ten years old. He eats 500 loaves of bread, a leg of an ox and drinks 100 pitchers of beer. Most important of all is that he can fix a head after being cut off and make a lion follow him, and know the number of locks in the temple of Tuhut". It was known that king Cheops had been trying to seek the locks of the temple of "Thoth" in order to make ones for his pyramid. Then the king said to his son : "you will bring this magician to me."

When the Prince brought "Diddy", the magician, the king asked: "Is it true, Diddy that you can fix a head that has been cut off ?" Diddy answered: "yes, I can". The king said : "Bring a prisonar to be excuted." Diddy said : "Not a man, Lord. Why do not we try this on cattle."

When Diddy did this magic act, the king asked him about the number of locks in "Thoth's " temple. But Diddy replied that he did not know the number , yet he knew their place . However , he did not know how to get them. Then the king asked : "Who then can bring these locks?" Diddy replied : "the eldest baby inside the matrix of "Rid-Didit" . The king asked who that woman was. Diddy answered : "She's the wife of Ra's priest in the city of "Sikhbou". She was told that her sons will rule after Cheops' dynasty and that the eldest of these sons will be the chief priest in Ain-Shams."

When Diddy noticed that Cheops got upset he said : "Pardon me, Lord. Is that all for three children ? I can assure you that your son and grandson will rule, then one of the three sons will rule." King Cheops made no comment, but he rewarded Diddy for this information by giving him residence at Hirdadif's house.

When "Rid-Didit" was in labour, Ra sent her some people to help in her delivery. She gave birth to three male babies. Isis made three crowns and hid them in a pile of barley which she kept in a safe and locked it.

There is another tale which is worthy of interest, namely the two brothers tale around which numerous studies have been done. It is a wonderful blend of myth, legend and folk tale. The tale is about two brothers "Anobees" and "Bata" who used to live in the same house. Anobees was married while " Bata" was like a son to him because Anobees took the responsibility of his upbringing . Bata used to help his brother in growing crops and raising the cattle and sheep. The two brothers lived in full harmony until they got separated because of the betrayal of Anobees's wife . It happened one day that Anobees sent his obedient brother Bata to get some seeds from the house and when Bata reached the house he asked his sister-in-law to bring the seeds.

She ordered him to go to the storeroom to get the seeds by himself. He got the seeds and passed by his sister-in-law while she was combing her hair in front of the mirror. The woman tried to seduce Bata, but he reproached her and went out carrying the seeds. He made up his mind not to mention this incident to his brother.

Fearing that the younger brother would disclose this secret to her husband, the dishonest wife pretended she was ill and went to bed. When the husband arrived, she started to moan and express her pains. When the husband asked what was wrong with her, she told him that his brother Bata wanted to rape her and when she resisted him he beat her and went off. While Bata was coming home, one of his cows revealed to him what had happened between Anobees and his wife, and the cow advised him to run away because his brother intended to kill him. Bata ran away and Anobees went after him, but the gods made a sea between them. So, the two brothers stood and confronted each other at the sea-shore.

They discussed the whole story and finally Anobees knew about his wife's betrayal. Anobees killed his wife and Bata told his brother that he would go to the cedar forest in order to put his heart in a flower of a cedar tree. Bata asked his brother , by way of atonement, to go and save him when his heart dies and explained to him a sign for that, i.e. when the beer mug overflows suddenly while he is drinking. Then , they parted.

The gods decided to reward Bata by creating a beautiful woman for him to take as a wife and he lived happily ever after with her. One day Bata warned his wife of going to the bank of the Nile alone, but she disobeyed him and went to the bank of the Nile and took a bath. A lock of her hair dropped in the Nile and was carried away by the current to the place where Pharaoh , the king , sits by the Nile. The pleasant smell spread out of the lock of hair.

Pharaoh knew that the smell came out from a lock of hair and sent his men to bring the owner of this lock immediately . Bata's wife was brought to Pharaoh, but she begged him to destroy the tree on which her husband's heart was lying before marrying Pharaoh. Pharaoh answered her request and so the woman was sure that her former husband "Bata" is totally dead.

Later, the beer mug overflowed while Anobees was drinking and he realized that his brother Bata was in danger. He remembered the promise he had given to his brother and hurried to the cedar forests. He found that the tree had been destroyed and the flower was thrown onto the ground. He picked up the flower and put it in water. Bata's heart came to

life immediately, and so did his body. The two brothers started to talk to each other and Bata said that he would convert himself into a wonderful ox and go to pharaoh who had usurped his wife. Anobees rode the ox to pharaoh's palace. On seeing this wonderful ox, pharaoh decided to buy it from Anobees. Bata entered his wife's room and undisguised himself. Then the wife insisted that pharaoh would slay that ox, but he did not understand the reason for his wife's insistence. Yet, he yielded to his wife's pressures and slew the ox. Two drops of blood fell on the ground from which two cedar trees grew up at one . The pharaoh, along with all the people present, considered those trees as a miracle . yet, Bata's wife did not know that Bata's soul had haunted those trees .

It happened one day when the wife was sitting under the shade of one of the trees , Bata appeared to his wife for the second time .

She got furious and insisted on having the trees cut down . The two trees were cut down, but two shells from the trees flew off and settled inside the wife and she got pregnant . She was not aware of the fact that she got pregnant by Bata . Believing that he was the father of the baby, the pharaoh was very pleased. The baby was born and raised in pharaoh's palace, and when pharaoh died the son succeeded him.

One day Bata revealed himself to the wife for the last time and killed her, and then he sent for his brother Anobees and appointed him as his successor.

That was the tale of the two brothers who were separated by the older brother's wife and reunited by the youngest brother's wife . Thus, both avenged themselves on their wives.

It is well-known that the Mother tale, which is a common denominator in the Arabian Nights, is that of the betrayal of king Sherayar's wife . Then the Arabian Nights emphasized the same theme in the first tale of the collection . This tale relates the king's desertion of his house and kingdom because of his wife's betrayal. The king travelled to his brother's kingdom in order to forget his sorrows. The king had an illusionary feeling that he was leading a happy life, but his brother revealed to him the secret of his wife's betrayal with a black slave while the king was on a hunting trip. On the king's return, his brother revealed to him the secret of his wife's betrayal. The king and his brother left the kingdom after taking revenge on their wives.

The Two Brothers tale is narrated in many countries, which led a number of scholars to hold comparisons among the various tales with a view to identifying the real origin of these tales . They reached a conclusion that the Ancient Egyptian tale is the origin of all other tales.

Needless to say that Ancient Egyptian narratives were not only reflected on world literature, but they also nourished it with motifs which helped in creating various patterns of narrative . Among these motifs is the one about the prophecy which comes true and makes man a slave to destiny as in the "Enchanted Prince" tale. According to this prophecy, it was predicted that after the prince's birth he would die immediately because of a dog, a serpent or a crocodile. Thus his father took every possible measure so as to keep such animals away from his son. Yet, later on, the prince insisted on having a dog of his own and his father gave him one. Then the listener to the tale is kept in suspense when the prince meets the serpent and the crocodile. The question is : which of these animals will kill the prince? The dog finally speaks up and tells the prince that he would kill him. The prince runs away from the dog by jumping into the river where he finds a crocodile which tells him the same thing. But the crocodile assures the prince that if he can kill the serpent which bothers him on the river, he would grant him life. Thus the incidents get more and more complicated. The narrative is interrupted at this stage because the papyrus is distorted. This seems as though the reader is expected to complete the tale according to his own imagination.

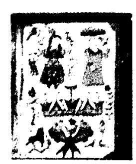
The tale also includes another motif which has prevailed in world narrative, namely the motif about the prince who arrives at a strange city to find heads of young men hung in the air. When the prince inquires about these heads, he is informed that the owners of these heads came to propose to the princess who had conditioned that anybody who wanted to marry her had to fly to her high bedroom window. Thus, those who could not succeed had their heads cut off until the enchanted prince came and succeeded in his attempt and married the princess.

Dr. Selim Hassan states in his book **Ancient Egyptian Literature** : "It should not be misunderstood that national literature which addresses the masses has no craftsmanship and does not require skill and cleverness. It needs, in fact, training and aptitude until one acquires the talent of hearing a tale and creating one similar to it. Thus it is an art and a craft, as well as inherited traditions. Hence, came the fame of talented narrators who appreciate the taste of their audience."

Thus, it seems that we have deliberately given the art of narrative the greatest attention since a narrative helps to reveal reality as represented in the beliefs, traditions, conventions and problems of daily life. In this connection, we can cite the opinions of Dr. Ahmed Badawi who states in the introduction of his book **Herodotus talks About Egypt :** " Egyptian folk literature was an historical source from which Herodotus derived his news about Egypt."

FOLKLORE IN THE MEMELUKE AND OTTOMAN ERAS

BY Prof . Mohammad Abd El - Salam



The Memeluke and Ottoman eras are two important rings in the chain of the long Egyptian history. They had great influence on the lives of Egyptians. Dr. Mohammed Zaghloul Sallam says, "The Memeluke and Ottoman eras which extended for more than six centuries had more effect on our contemporary lives than all the Arab and Moslem eras - put together - had."

The Memeluke era - as it is known - succeeded the Ayubite age which ended with the death of El-Saleh Ayub and the assassination of his son Turan Shah and the appointment of Ezz Eddin Aybak as Sultan of Egypt after he had married Shagaret El-Dorr - the girl slave of El-Saleh Ayub and his widow.

The Ayubite reign was established on the debris of the Fatimid State which was based on the Shiite doctrine that tinged Egyptian popular life with folkloric outstanding qualities represented in festivals, celebrations, and practices that became common among Egyptians because they suited their nature and moods. When the Ayubites came into power, they did their best to wipe out the traces left by the Fatimids in the lives of Egyptians; so they changed their customs and stamped out their paintings and slogans as the Ayubites were hostile to the Shiite doctrine and supported the Sunni one.

The Memelukes followed the example of their masters - the Ayubites - by supporting the

Sunni doctrine, but they had their own qualities which made them distinct from others. Concerning their race, they were a mixture of Turks and Circassians who were brought to Egypt as slaves. Then they were prepared to be a class of mercenaries to be used by those in power.

Historical studies show that they lived in Egypt as "a distinguished class separated from all others". They had their own customs, traditions, values and even their own attire. They ruled the Egyptians with tyranny and exploitation. Nevertheless, Egypt, under their rule, was the seat of the Abbassid caliphate which was devastated by the tartars in Bagdad. The Memelukes played an important part in fighting against the Tartars and the Crusaders and repelling them. The Ottoman rule of Egypt set up on the remains of the Memeluke reign which came to an end by the fall of Sultan El-Ghoury from his horse in the battle of Marg Dabeq in 922 A.H. With the Ottoman occupation, Egypt became a follower after it had been followed, occupied after it had been independent, and a mandate after it had been a Sultanate. It became a satellite of the Caliphate State after it had been its seat. Hence, Egypt was deprived of the means of progress, and became victim of backwardness, degeneration, weakness, poverty and ignorance. This phase lasted about three centuries and Egypt awoke only to the booming of the guns of the French Campaign.

Folklore researchers say that folkloric material is inherited by its own nature, it is handed down from one generation to the other, and it is closely connected with the life of the community. It performs a duty which is linked with the circumstances and development of the society.

It can be said that the Memeluke and Ottoman eras - with the circumstances and events that they witnessed - represented a 'suitable medium' for verifying this rule. What were the folkloric forms and expressions of these eras? This is the question we shall try to answer by introducing models of the folklore of the two eras.

Feasts and Celebrations:

Feasts and celebrations are suitable occasions for the appearance of the folkloric material in more than one of its forms. In the Memeluk era, Egyptians celebrated many feasts such as "Wafa' El Nil' (faithfulness of the Nile) and 'Kasr El Khaleeg' (Breaking of the Bay). Dr. Kassem Abdu Kassem says, "Wafa' El Nil and Kasr El Khaleeg were the most famous feasts which had a special type during the rule of the Memeluke Sultans. The annual flood of the Nile aroused the interest of Egyptians of different classes as they waited for it and made calculations. They measured the amount of increase caused by the river flood day after day. On the twenty sixth of the Coptic month of Ba'ouna the height of water at the river bed was measured and this was the basis on which any increase was reckoned. In the afternoon, the Nile water was measured at Geziret El Roda so that town criers announced the increase to the people in the streets and markets to reassure them". Biloty of Crete who visited Egypt at the beginning of the fifteenth century said that at the time of the flood he saw several knights carrying banners and moving towards the measurement to know the amount of the increase, then they moved through the streets crying 'the river has increased so and so..'. Those knights described by Biloty were called by the Arab sources 'The River Criers'. When the river reaches 16 cubits, the river criers announce the news that the river has reached the sign of 'faithfulness' and the Caliph curtain is drawn on the big window on the eastern side of the measure-house.

That night was one of the joyful nights in Cairo and Fustat as people used to illuminate a great number of lanterns and candles so that Cairo night turned into day by these illuminations; then the princes came accompanied by

the Estadar (Supervisor of the Sultan's houses). After that dresses are distributed and reciters go to recite the Holy Koran all night at the Measure-House. The reciters are followed by singers who sang all the night. Next morning, tables are laid with different kinds of roast meat, sweets, and fruit. The Sultan or his delegate arrives. Common people snatch the food without anyone stopping them. After people have eaten, Wafa' El Nil and Kasr El Khaleeg celebrations start with the Sultan or his delegate coming down the 'mountain citadel' attended by the high princes and the elite. Then they go down the Nile and sail in boats decorated with coloured flags and shining emblems. Drums are beaten and fireworks are shot from the boats until they reach the Measure-House. After food is served, Saffron is dissolved in rose-water in a silver vessel which the Sultan gives to the supervisor of the Measure who throws himself fully dressed into the water holding the silver vessel anointing the measure with scent. Then the Sultan or his delegate comes out and sits by the large window distributing dresses and presents... Then he boards the Sultan's Ship surrounded by the princes' boats extravagantly decorated followd by tens of ships and boats of citizens until they reach Fom-El-Khaleeg. At the site of 'Sad -El-Khaleeg' the Sultan's delegate is usually waiting with some princes on the barrage of the dam. The Sultan rides his horse from Fom-El-Khaleeg to the site of the dike. He holds a gold spade and beats the dike thrice, then he mounts his horse again . A crowd of people come with their axes and dig the dike until water flows into the bay then the Sultan moves on to his citadel.

The celebration of 'Wafa' El Nil' feast has continued till today but it has become a symbolic festival after the construction of the High Dam on the Nile. The traditional flood phenomena which were known to the Egyptians have disappeared.

The Martyr's Feast:

This feast is linked with that of Wafa' El-Nil.'. El-Makrizi says, 'Among the Egyptian feasts was that of the martyr. It was on the eighth day of the Coptic month of Bashans. It was believed that the Nile would not flow every year until the Copts had thrown into it a wooden coffin containing one of the fingers of their dead ancestors. That day was a feast in which the people congregated at Shubra - a district of Cairo. Copts came from all villages, riding horses, pitching camps on river banks and on islands.Innumerable crowds met together and money was squandered ... That was the case until the years 702 when Egypt was ruled by Sultan King El-Nasser Mohammed Ibn Qalawun assisted by Emir Rokn Eddin Bibars El-Gashankir ... Emir Bibars stopped that altogether".

El-Makrizi, however, reveals how El-Nasser Mohammed Ibn Qalawun restored that festival and tells the story of how that happened. He said,

"Two of the Sultan's intimate friends - Emir Yalbugha El-Yehyawi and Emir El-Tanbugha El-Mardini - asked him to go out hunting for some days. The Sultan did not want them to go because he loved them so much. He said to them 'Let's restore the Martyr's feast. Watching it will be more entertaining to you than hunting.' The feast was near, so they agreed. The news soon spread, and when the day came, the princes sailed in their boats in the Nile,. etc. The celebration of this feast had stopped for 36 years and it continued after it had been restored till the year 755... In the last ten days of the month of Ragab of the same year, the Chamberlain and Emir Alaa Eddin Ali Ibn Al-Korany (the Vali of Cairo) went to the district of Shubra El-Kheyam where the Coptic church was demolished and the martyr's finger was taken in a box which was brought to King El-Saleh and was burnt between his hands in the square and the ashes were scattered in the river so that Copts might

not take it. Since that day, the martyr's feast has been stopped".

We can see clearly the similarity between what was being done in the 'Martyr's feast' and the story of the 'Nile Virgin'. The throwing of the coffin containing the martyr's finger into the Nile to cause the flood, and the throwing of a virgin into the river for the same purpose have the same significance. It can be said that the story of the 'Martyr's finger' is the Christian version of the story of the 'Nile Virgin'. It is the proof and the example of how the folkloric material is re-formulated to suit the changing circumstances. The Virgin in the ancient legend became the finger of the martyr saint in the Christian era. Similarly, we can link the story of the martyr's finger with the legend of Osiris whose body was torn and scattered over the water of the Nile and the flood that ensued. It is significant that Osiris was described as the 'martyr' and Dr. Ahmed Badri calls him 'the master of the Martyrs of ancestry'.

Ashura Day Celebration:

In the Memeluk era, Egyptians celebrated 'Ashura Day', Dr. Said Abdel Fattah Ashur says, "Ashura day falls on the tenth of the Moslem month 'Moharram'. Memeluke jurisprudents considered it one of the main Moslem seasons. People used to be hospitable on that day towards family, relatives, orphans and paupers so that some of the wealthy spent as much as one thousand dinars in the form of alms on that day. During the Memeluke era, people adhered to certain customs on 'Ashura Day' such as cooking cereals and visiting cemetries. Women used to visit the old mosque at Cairo and Fustat, staying there from sunrise till sunset, without the participation of men. There, women spent the whole day touching the walls of the mosque for blessing. As for the Shiites, they used to mourn for 'Al-Hussein' on 'Ashura Day'. Their poets used to recite elegies according to the customs of the Fatimids. The Sunna poets competed with the Shiite ones. Shiite women went out with kohl in their eyes, and dyeing their hands with henna, and a woman who does not do this, is neglectful of Ashura".

Ashura and the Fatimids:

El-Makrizi says about Ashura in the Fatimid era, "Ibn El-Tuweir said that on the tenth day of Moharram the Caliph abstained from seeing people. As the sun ascended the sky, the chief of the judges and witnesses - in a different dress- headed towards Al-Hussein mosque and stayed there with the reciters in the mosque. The minister came and sat in the front together with the Judge and the host on both sides. Poets rose one after another reciting poems mourning members of the Prophet's family (Peace be on them)... After three hours, they were called to the Palace. The Minister goes back home. The Chief Judge and the host together with their companions get through the gold door to find corridors covered with mats instead of carpets and benches set in the empty spaces in addition to covered tables. There they find the Chamberlain seated. The Judge and the host sit beside him. There are also people of different classes. Reciters read and chant. One thousand pots of lentils, salted fish, pickles, cheese, dairy, honey, pastry and bread are fetched on the tables. At noon, the Chamberlain and the host admit people to eat and when they finish they return mounting in their attire and wailling they wandered about Cairo all that day.. Merchants closed their shops and opened them in the afternoon when everybody went to his home".

That was how the Fatimids celebrated Ashura Day. To them, it was a day of sadness and mourning, on which statesmen changed their clothes and food and put on coarse attire and ate poor food. They sat on coarse beds. Their processions wandered about Cairo streets mourning for the master of martyrs 'Al-Hussein Ibn Ali' who died heroically on that day.

Folkloric Arts: The Shadow - Play

Historic and literary studies point out that

the 'Shadow-play' was one of the most popular folkloric arts with the Egyptians during the Memeluke and Ottoman eras. It was a type of indirect acting, as Dr. Abdel Hamid Yunis says.

It had its own plays known as 'Babat'. Dr. Said Abdel Fattah describes the show as follows: 'Models and shapes were made of leather or cardborad paper in the form of puppets and persons. Then they were put behind a white curtain behind which there was a lamp so that the shadow of these models was reflected on the screen to be seen by people on the other side. In the Meantime, the producer of the play disappears behind the curtain so that his shadow is unseen. The puppets are moved by a stick, and echo words that conform with their movements."

Dr. Mohammed Zaghloul Sallam describes the spread of the Shadow-play during the Memeluk era as follows: "This art gained popularity during the Memeluke era and people used it for fun and enjoyment. They used it also as an escape from their shortcomings by exaggerating them in a sarcastic way. "The Shadow-Play had been known to the Egyptians till the end of the first world war and after. Dr. Abdel Hamid Younis says that the house where the Shasow-Play took place after the first world war lay at the entrance of Fom El-Khaleeg at Sayeda Zeinab district in Cairo.

Dr Younis states how this art came to an end: "It is odd that the Shadow-play disappeared from that house after a few years as it did from other places in Cairo to be replaced by the silent cinematograph". In other words, it vanished when its function came to an end and its alternative appeared.

The 'Babat' of the Shadow-Play:

As it has already been mentioned the 'Babah' is the Shadow-Play show. Sponsors of this art made a number of 'babat' most important of which are Ibn Daniel's babat 'The Shadow's Shade', 'Strange and Odd' and 'The Infatuated Lover and the Orphan'. Ibn Daniel is an Iraqi poet born at Mosul. He went to Egypt during the reign of El-Zaher Bebars. He worked at first as an oculist, then he surpassed in the art of the Shadow-Play. There are different views about his 'Babat'. Ibrahim Hamada sees that they can be included within the framework of folkloric literature. Dr. Abdel Hamid Yunis says that 'Ibn Daniel's Babat, in spite of their fame, are not folklore. They are the outcome of individual sentiment of a man who wanted to prove his genius in the arts of expression known to his age. We exclude them from the circle of folkore on a scientific basis and not for their excessive sarcasm or their obscenities.

Folkloric Literature:
"Stories and Popular Biographies":

Stories and popular biographies are considered one of the most important and most famous forms of folkloric literature. This is the reason why they aroused the interest of pioneers and students of Folkloric literature in Egypt. Thus, they gave them all their care. For instance, Professor Suheir El-Kalamawy studied 'Arabian Nights', Prof. Abdel Hamid Younis studied the biographies of 'El-Zaher Bibars' and 'Al-Hilalia'; Prof. Nabila Ibrahim: 'El-Amira Zat-El-Himma', and Prof. Mahmoud Zohny: 'Antara'.

Their valuable studies contributed to the casting of light on these works stressing their great literary, artistic value as a form of folkloric literature,on one hand, and as a means of bringing in the limelight the depth of the Arab Egyptian society, giving a general survey of it, on the other .

A number of these biographies appeared during the Memeluk and Ottoman eras such as 'El-Zaher Bibars', 'Seif Ibn Zi Yazan', 'Ali El-Zeba' El-Masri', and others were completed such as 'One Thousand and One Nights', 'El-Hilalia' or, at least, they took their final shape.

The emerging of some biographies and the

completion of others were the aspects of the Egyptian personality in those ages. Dr. Abdel Hamid Younis says, "The Egyptian environment received the biography of Beni-Hilal and others in the post-Fatimid era after the rule was in the hands of non-Arabs. This had its own significance. After the Arabism and Islam of the Egyptian people, they came to be conscious of their own identity, and they needed to express this identity. This incited them to select certain events to interpret their national sentiments which were tinted with Arabism; so, they found their way to Antara, and Seif Ibn Zi Yazan. This is the reason, perhaps, why folkloric literature flourished during the Memeluke era.

These biographies were "the artistic food of all Egyptians regardless of their tendencies or class", Dr Abdel Hamid Younis says.

Lane describes the reciters of these stories and biographies as he saw them when he visited Egypt. He says, "Story tellers haunt the cafés of Cairo and other cities during the nights of special religious feasts, and entertain people in the most attractive way". He divides them into classes saying, "Poets are the greatest in number. They are also called 'Abu-Zeideya' after their recounting of 'Abu-Zeid'. They were about fifty in Cairo and they used to recount the events of Abu-Zeid El-Hilaly ... The poet usually recounted impromptu without any book. He chanted and played music after every verse to the tunes of the poet's lyre."

He mentions another class, "Another class of story-tellers is that of the 'Modernists'. In number, they are next to the poets. In Cairo, there were about thirty of them. The 'Modernists' confine themselves to recounting the biography of El-Zaher, so, they were called 'El-Zahiriya'. In their reciting, they did not use any book". He goes on to say, "In Cairo, there is a third class of storytellers called the 'Anatra or Antariya'. They are much less in number than the former classes. Their number now is not more than six. They are so-called because their subject is the 'Biography of Antara'. They use a book as they recite their poetry; but they read prose in a slang way and they do not use the lyre".

The Anatra also recount the biography of Zat-El-Himma, Seif Ibn Zi Yazan, and One Thousand and One Nights. Lane reveals the important matter that 'the Anatra did not content themselves with the biography of Antara. It was said that they sometimes dealt with the biographies of the holy war warriors such as those of 'Zi Al-Himma' - the name of the heroine. Years ago, there was frequent telling of the story of 'Seif El-Yazal' which is a book that includes wonderful stories. Moreover, they sometimes told the stories of the 'Arabian Nights'.

Lane explains why story-tellers abandoned the 'Arabian Nights' and 'Seif': "I believe that the story-tellers abandoned those two books for their scarcity. A complete copy of the 'Arabian Nights', if it was available, would cost a fortune which the story-teller could not afford. I doubt that their choice of the biographies of Abu-Zeid, El-Zaher, Antar and Zi-Al-Himma was due to the fact that they were better than the 'Arabian Nights'. But it is certain that modern Egyptians still retain a bedouin sentiment which makes them rejoice when stories of war are told." In this description, Lane reveals the part played by popular story-tellers in the artistic and social lives of the Egyptians. He tackles important issues that are closely connected with popular biographies as one of the forms of popular literature and casts light on their development and qualities.

It is to be noticed that biographies mentioned by Lane fall in two categories: one which was still alive with a wide audience and this is why it was told from memory without reading from any book. An example of this included the Hilaliya and 'Abu Zeidiya' whose reciters in Cairo were fifty and 'Al-Zaheria' whose modernist reciters were thirty. The second category was that which was not on demand by the public. The number of reciters here dwindled and biographies were written

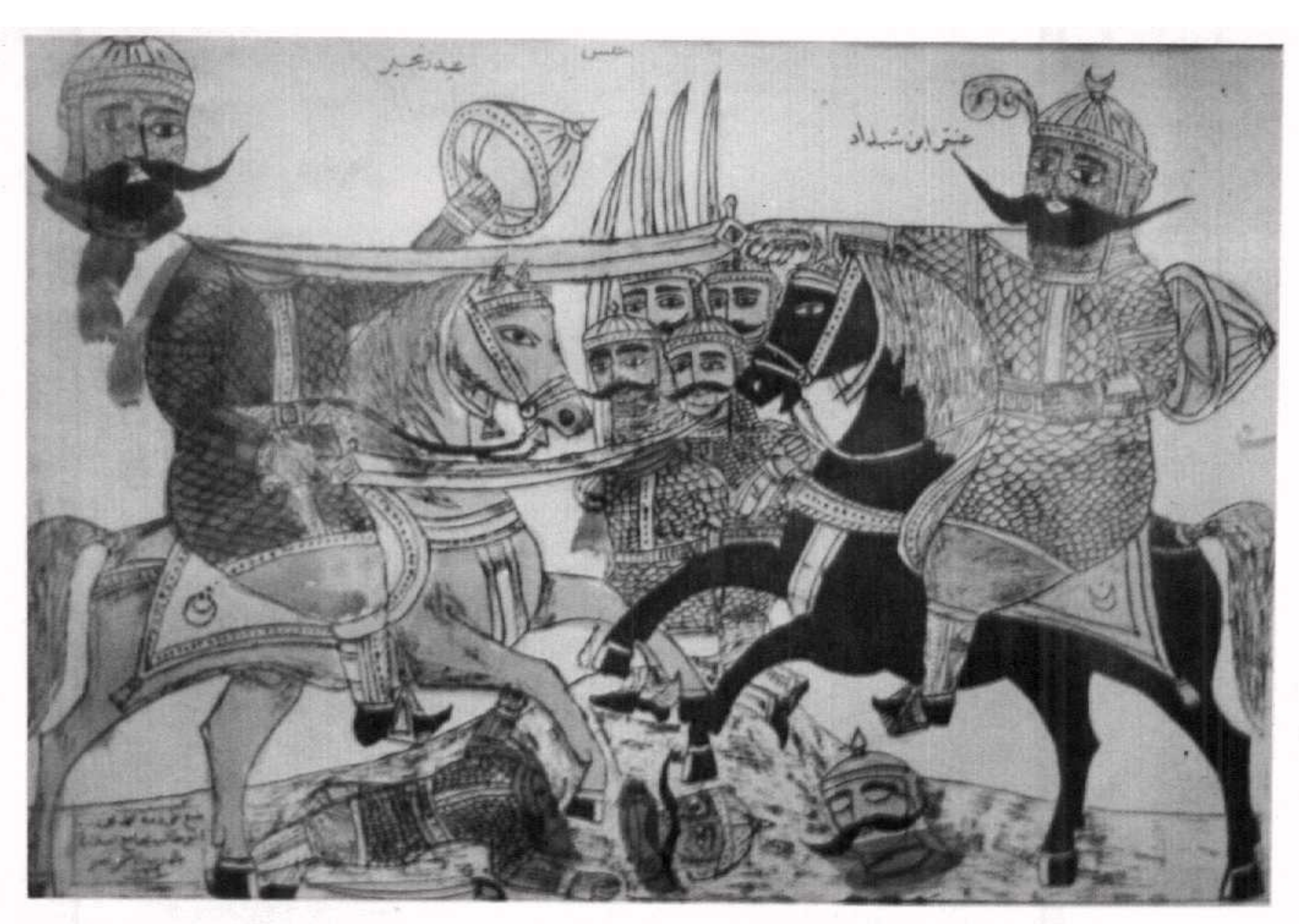
down in books so that they might not be lost. An example of this is the biography of Antara whose reciters were only six in Cairo. Such biographies were rarely cited and began to find their way to oblivion had they not been recorded in books.

It is worthy of mention that 'Al-Hilalia' biography is the only one that has been recited among all classes of Egyptians till very recently and this is why Professor Abdel Hamid Younis says, "It will live so long as the Egyptian character exists."

One of the illustrations that represents the heroic events between Abu - Zeid El - Hilaly and Hijazi ibn Rafi'.



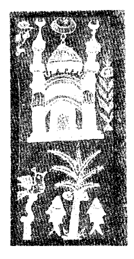
(The Geographical Society Museum)



Samples of popular drawings that record popular biographies and stories

EGYPTIAN FOLK LITERATURE PROVERBS, FOLK TALES AND BALLADS

Due to the relatively insufficient space allocated for the abridged form of the volume ***Egyptian Folk Arts*** *which has recently been published, it has been found feasible to incorporate the literary topics under one title . These topics include proverbs, folk tales, and ballads, which are written by Dr. Ahmed Morsi, Dr. Nabila Ibrahim and Dr. Khutry Oraby, respectively. This task has been undertaken by Dr. Nabila Ibrahim.*



Egyptians are well known for the diversity of their folk proverbs, which indicate some accuracy of understanding the aspects of human life. These Proverbs also reflect a bitter criticism of everything that people are not satisfied with, morally, politically, or socially. Amidst the multiplicity of these topics people do not forget to express by means of proverbs - the moral aspect which supports life and transcends it over all its burdens and hardships.

This large number of Egyptian proverbs reflect the nature of the Egyptian people who reject all aspects of default in people and life, and search for perfect man and life. One category of folk proverbs illustrates man's view of heaven and earth . In other words, there is some sort of unified attitude which governs the structure of life and religion. For instance :

(Lit) **" To be patient is to win, and God's act is passing.**

But if you lose patience, you'll die and God's act is passing."

(Lit) **" He who doesn't fear God, one should beware of him.'**

(Lit) **"It remains fire all night, it becomes ashes in the morning . It has God that disposes ."**

Each of the above proverbs reflects man's desire to lead a perfect life, since life should combine both religion and life. It suffices to consider the proverb which says : "God grants the weak when the strong wonders." and "He who doesn't fear God, beware of him". These proverbs warn those who are self-conceited and those who do whatever they want in life. Similarly, if we examine the following proverbs :

(Lit) **"A morsel in a starving man's stomach is better than building a mosque."**

i.e. (Charity begins at home).

(Lit) **"Spending money on one's household is better than spending it on a mosque."**

i.e. (Charity begins at home).

We would realize the close relationship between life and religion.

Thus, feeding a starving person and providing all urgent needs of one's household is better - in God's view - than building a mosque. This ideal unity of religion and life is reflected by public perception onto the social field through another set of proverbs. For example :

(Lit.) "A losing reconciliation is better than a winning case."

(Lit.) "You fight me in a crowd and apologize in a lane."

The first proverb calls for sacrificing material loss for the sake of social reconciliation, while the second reflects one's concern about one's social standing. Thus, if a fight takes place between two persons in front of others, which may result in shaking the social position of either party, reconciliation should take place in the presence of people, so that the insulted person may regain his position among others.

Among the proverbs that reflect the unity of the group are those which stress the good relationship among neighbours. For example :

"Choose the neighbour before the house and the companion before the road."

"Take care of your neighbour even if he is unjust to you."

Another group of proverbs sets some sort of constitution to which people can stick, since life is common to all people. Besides, man's only aim in this life is to seek peace, security and abundance. For example :

"He who does not have a master, the devil will be his master."

"Only those who have a ladder can go up."

The Egyptians are also well-known for their folk tales, since they have a large repertoire starting from the Pharaonic age up to the present time. These tales include legendary tales called "Haddoota" by the Egyptians, real-life tales, supernatural tales and ballads. The first type which belongs to legendary tales is similar to world legendary tales in depicting the hero while making his adventures in the exotic non-human world in search of the strange demand. They also picture the hero as confronting the evil powers which threaten his life and all the good powers which support him with the magic wand. Still this type of narrative preserves its local privacy, as Egyptian legendary narratives give special names to the characters. For example, the hero in most cases, is called "Shater Hassan or Mohamed" and "Shater" refers to the brave hero who is able to enter the exotic world. He is also capable of resolving discrepancies and contradictions in our world. On the other hand, this narrative gives this evil character "names such as"goblin, giant, devil or geni" . Each of these names has its own qualities which are well-established in the minds of people. However, factual or real-life narrative which arises from man's view of the world is similar

to proverbs in its criticism of life and also in depicting the model pattern of conduct that people should stick to so that life can be bearable and look more peaceful and harmonious. The folk narrator, therefore, makes use of the art of allegory in narrating his tales, which emphasizes the imaginative ability of the Egyptian people.

To mention one example, it is related that a farmer used to work everyday in his field beside the cemetery. One day he heard a voice calling him and told him that so and so would die the following day and so would his own wife. The farmer was frightened on hearing that invisible voice that predicted the death of his neighbour and his own wife. Returning home that evening, the farmer heard crying and wailing in his neighbours' house. He knew that his neighbour died. At that moment the farmer was sure that his wife would die. Next morning he went to the field as usual and worked all day expecting news of his wife's death at any moment. In the meantime , the wife felt that her husband was unusually late for dinner, so she prepared two eggs and a loaf of bread. When she was about to eat, a beggar knocked at her door and begged for a loaf of bread to eat. The wife did not hesitate to give the too eggs and the bread to the beggar who thanked her and went off praying God to give her long life.

Returning home, the farmer found his wife safe and sound. He was amazed because he took that prediction seriously. When he went to the field next morning, he called the voice and said that the neighbour died but the prediction was not true about his wife. The voice asked him to look at the sky. The farmer saw the picture of the egg dish and a loaf of bread standing between a big rock and his wife's head, but he could not understand what he saw.

He hurried to his house and asked his wife about what happened the day before. She told him the story of the beggar . Now, the farmer could understand the meaning of the picture that he saw in the sky and said to himself : "Indeed, morsels (of bread) prevent misfortunes."

Thus, the Egyptians emphasise, in their narratives, the fact that charitable deads in life have two inseparable aspects, social and individual. The former has to do with social solidarity and compassion among people , and the latter has to do with the individual who performs the charitable deed and who is due to receive the reward from God.

Regarding the ballad, it can be noticed that it is a literary form that is closely related to man's life from birth to death. People sing for the child since his birthday. The ballad is also sung in weddings, parties and religious ceremonies. It is not , therefore, surprising for the ballad to express man's joys and sorrows, and his feelings on the most private religious and worldly occasions. The following ballad expresses the standards required from the bride by the rural community :

" A well-bred girl's wedding gift is worth two thousand and one hundred pounds."

That means : the girl who comes from a good family should deserve a high dowry. Moreover, the ballad praises the bride's beauty. Thus, the following song is addressed to the bridegroom:

"Tell him (the bridegroom) congratulations for the celebrations; he won the pomegranate with apple-colour faced."

Tell him congratulations. Oh, dear; he married the moon-faced and highly priced (bride).

Social values do not only stress the choice of the bride, but also the reputation of the bride's mother, uncle and father. One of the songs says:

" Before asking for the girl's hand ask about her mother, father and uncle's reputation."

Similarly, folk legacy is laden with work ballads. A work ballad has to accompany work, especially when this work extends for a long time. Moreover, people doing the same work take part in the song.

Ballads expressing mourning and wailing have been created by women ever since Isis mourned the disappearance of her husband Osiris.

"Mawwal"[(1)] is another art of singing in the Egyptian folk legacy. Egyptians are well-known for their 'Mawwals' which one person may sing for himself while performing an individual manual work. One may also sing a 'mawawl' for an audience. There are two types of 'mawwal' The 'green mawwal' is sung for expressing love and infatuation. The 'red mawwal' expresses the singer's sorrows for the loss of values and ethics. The 'mawwal' may also develop to become a long lyric tale .

Finally, it can be concluded that folk literature trully reflects the identity of the Egyptian people, as it gives a true picture of their aspirations, complaints, and severe criticism of the negative aspects of life.

(1) A poem in colloquial Arabic, often sung to the accompaniment of a reed pipe .

The Narrator and The Rababa



EGYPT IN THE ARABIC FOLK BIOGRAPHIES

BY Mohammed Ragab Al - Naggar



The following is a brief account of the folk biography of Egypt.

There is a general consensus among Arab Folklrists that Arabic folk biographies have reached their artistic and thematic maturity by the end of the Memelake age in Egypt, and that they have derived their national spirit and epical character inside the Cairene environment. Despite the fact that none of the folk biographies is devoid of a mention of Egypt regarding conquests, emanicipation and reconstruction, Egypt stands out as having three epics of a total of seven folk Arabic biographies.

These epics represent the story of Egypt across time and place These biographies are as follows : the biography of king Seif Ben Ze-Yazan, the biography of Al Zaher Beibars and that of Ali Al- Zeibak. It is noticeable that the three biographies relate the story of Arab Islamic Egypt from the perspective of the Egyptian folk society which has created and appreciated them.

The biography of king Seif Ben Ze-Yazan revolves round the geographical and cultural birth of Egypt which represents the (beginning). The biography of Al-Zaher Beibars tells about the greatness of Memeluke Egypt during an age of leadership and heroism which stands for the (climax). The biography of Ali Al - Zeibak revolves round the genius of Egyptian folk resistance

during the Ottoman rule of Egypt which represents he (end) . This end coincided with the end of folk epical creativity .

The three biographies together with their three historical stages of Egypt, namely, origin , independence and leadership and occupation and failure include the entire story of Pharonic, Coptic and Arab Islamic Egypt as viewed and related by the Egyptian people in their epical legacy and folk heroic literature . It is no coincidence that the biographies of Seif Ben Ze-yazan and Beibars belong to epical literature (Sword chivalry) while that of Ali-Al-Zeibak belongs to the literature of (shuttaar) (mental and shrewdness chivalry) .

The biography of king Seif ben Ze-Yazan or the Nile Epic is a reading in the Egyptian geographical folklore and the legendary legacy of the origin of Egypt and its sacred Nile .

This is an Egyptian biography despite its historical Yemeni nucleus as represented in the character of its hero who was originally one of the liberation heroes during the pre-Islamic age .

However, its Egyptian characters are evident in its pivotal issues such as the Nile, the foundation of Egyptian cities on the Nile banks, and the Arabicizatian of Egypt .

The birth prophecy of Seif, the hero, indicates his heroic role in the biography. It also gives reference to the appearance of Islam and the flourishing of Egypt during Seif's days . It also states that the Nile will flow in Egypt, and that the Arabs will inhabit Egypt .

The hero grows up and the incidents get more and more complicated, the hero had to bring the Nile book as a dowry for Queen Shama , daughter of king Afrah who had adopted the hero since he was a foundling . The trip of finding the Nile book is one of the most adventurous chapters of the biography . It is full of wonderous creatures and episodes and it ends with the discovery of the sources of the Nile and the flow of the Nile in Egypt for the first time . The prophecy comes true and Seif conquers Egypt and becomes king of Egypt and all the Nile countries.

What is the book of the Nile ?

The (narrator) relates .. " that book was worshipped by the people of the city of (Keimer) who believed that the Nile book brought them water for cultivating their lands . That book was kept in a box made of black ebony and decorated with plates made of red gold. This box is placed inside a wooden coffin decorated with plates and chips of silver and covered with curtains made of coloured silk and kept inside a dome made of white alabaster . The gate of the dome is made of Chinese iron with padlocks made of steel .

King Kamroon used to say that : " It is believed that this book will be taken by a great King and it will make the Nile flow and irrigate the land . This means that this book is a sacred one as it is associated with a sacred reiver namely , the Nile .

The box in which the book is kept reminds us of the martyr's finger in the Coptic belief. The Copts used to keep this finger in a box believing that the Nile would not flow unless this box is opened and the finger is thrown into the Nile as one of the rituals of reverence and hospitality , and then the finger is returned into the box for the following year .

A study of Egypt's national and cultural Role : Genius of the folk citizen .

The biography of Al-Zaher Beibars is a totally Egyptian story created by unknown folk Egyptian artists . It embodies and commemorates the greatness of Memeluke Egypt and its historic national and military role in defending the Arab and Islamic world during the dark middle ages .

At that time , the Arab world was torn between the Mongol and Crusade troops . This biography tackles the events of a rather long historical era as compared to other biographies

It records the history of the Arab identity, in general , and the Egyptian identity , in particular, since the appearance of the Turks on the political scene in Baghdad from the year 232 A. H. until the modern age .

Biography of Ali-Alzeibak . The epic of the Egyptian folk resistance .

The theme of this biography started originally in a flok tale which subsequently entered the tales of heroes in the Arabian Nights .

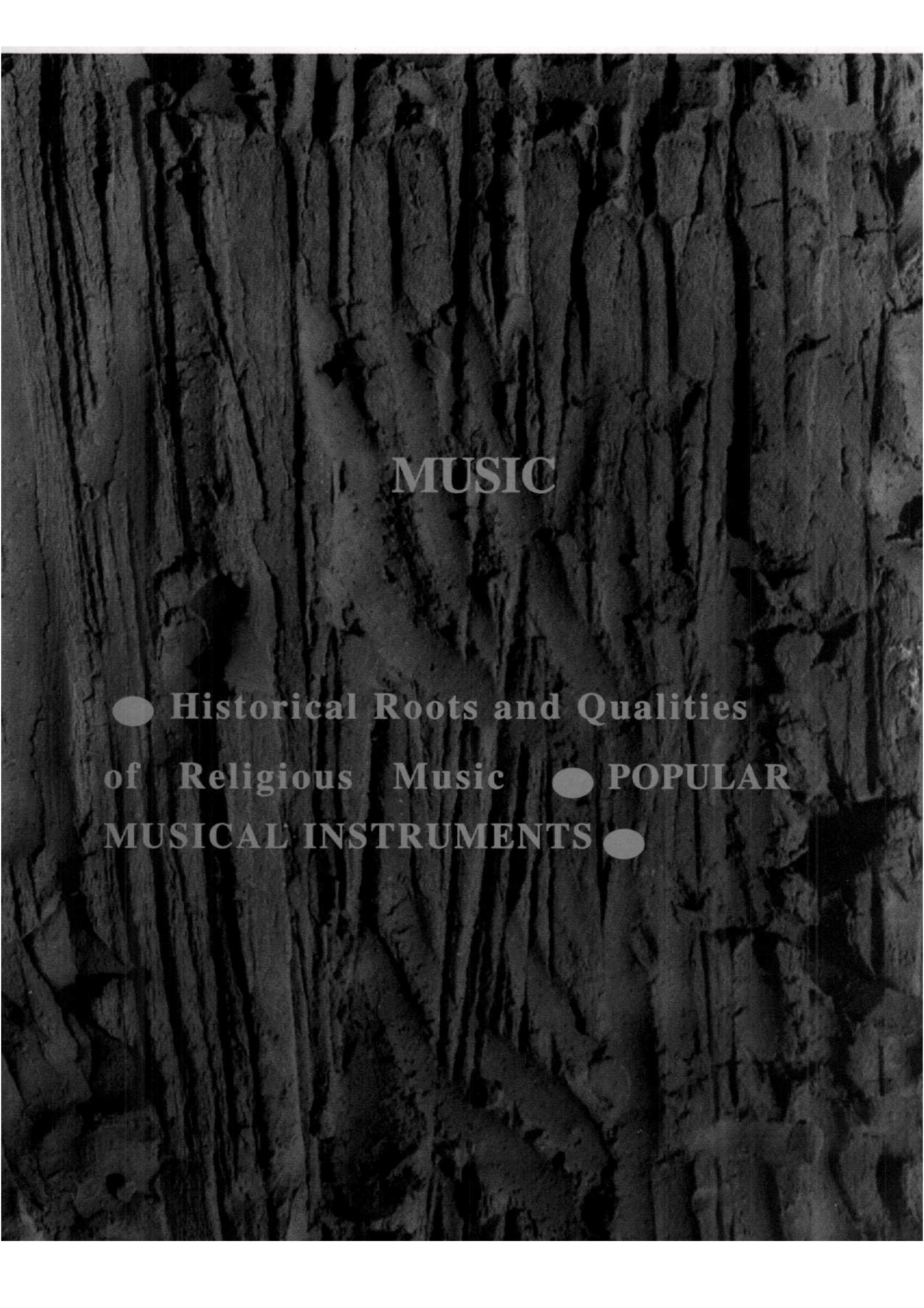
The absence of civilization at that time allowed legendary thought and magic world to govern some incidents . The folk narrator's skill is evident in the marraige between reality with its defeat and atrocities on the one hand and imagination with its victories and dreams on the other . This has been successefully achieved by an artistic trick known as (Alnafeelah) .

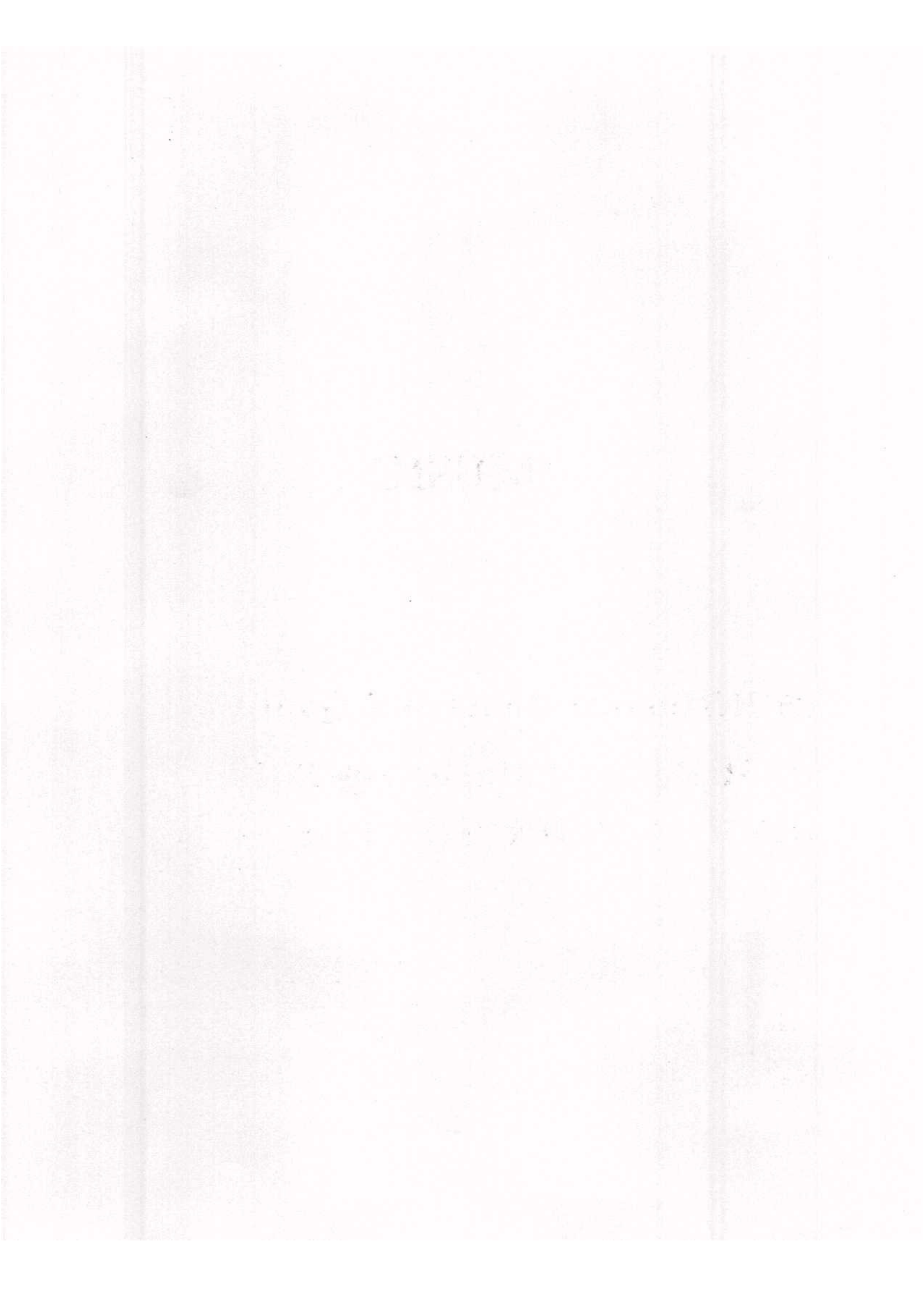
It should be noted that the characters of this biography are real historical figures . The heroes were able to achieve heroic records in the memory of history . This indicates that the public feeling selected the heroes from historical figures and not necessarily from the heroes of war . The unknown writer of the biography used symbols in referring to the events of his age by using names of past figures such as Ibn Toloon and Haroon Al-Rasheed .



Samples of popular drawings that record popular biographies and stories

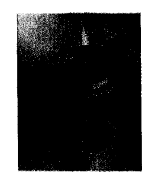
The mourners, Ramoza tomb at the Western bank, Luxor.


MUSIC
● Historical Roots and Qualities of Religious Music ● POPULAR MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS ●



HISTORICAL ROOTS AND QUALITIES OF RELIGIOUS MUSIC

BY Suleiman Gamil



Religious music played by the ancient Egyptians inside the Pharaonic temple thousands of years ago was transferred with its essential qualities to the Jewish temple in Alexandria, then to the Coptic Orthodox church, then to anthems in Islamic Egypt preserving the same musical instruments, forms of chanting and worship in new religious involvements of the Christian faith in its old and New Testaments, then of the Islamic faith. This means that the practice of religious music continued in Egypt preserving its essential qualities for a long, continual history. This paper will cast light on the following subjects: Music in the Egyptian temple, Music in the Coptic Orthodox church and its relation with music in the ancient Jewish temple in Egypt,and the music of anthems in Islamic Egypt.

First:

Music in the Ancient Egyptian Temple

Since the ancient Egyptian started to ponder about the phenomena of the sky and its relation to his existence on earth, his religious experience and practice had expanded to be reflected in various religious musical performances.

It is evident from the documents of ancient Egyptian history that the religious experience of the ancient Egyptians was the source of all their abstract and concrete cultural activities. They be-

lieved that everything in their lives was sacred as it sprang from the god, and that any activity they practised in their lives aimed at the pleasing of that god and the securing of eternity in heaven in the 'life after death'.

The gods of the ancient Egyptian were animals, reptiles, birds and plants. They were also in the shape of the head of an animal on the body of a man. With the beginning of recorded history, the god took the shape of a man who was the king worshipped on earth who - after his earthly death- was transferred to heaven to lead an eternal life beside the sun - god 'Ra' - the great god of the universe - for the ancient Egyptians believed that the king was the god's son or the god himself.

For every province in Egypt, there was a special god whom the people worshipped and who - they believed-possessed good and evil. At the Egyptian museum in Cairo, there are pictures of some of these local gods painted on some musical instruments which were used as part of the worshipping process. An example of this is the picture of god 'Bast' which takes the form of a cat-head drawn on the metallic handle of the sistrum which is a rhythmical musical instrument used in accompanying religious hymns inside the temple. In addition to the local gods whose influence was confined to the regions in which they were worshipped, the ancient Egyptians believed that there were cosmic, universal gods such as 'Nut' - the god of heaven, 'Geb' - the god of earth, 'Shu' - the god of air, 'Tefnut' - god of dew or "air and moisture", 'Ra'-god of the sun, 'Osiris' - god of eternity, 'Hapi' - god of the Nile and 'Nun' god of the ocean. The ancient Egyptians believed that 'Osiris' was the god who taught them respect of the law and how to live in a noble human society. He was the god mentioned in ancient Egyptian records as the god who rid the Egyptians from want and wild life, who offered them the laws and taught them how to venerate the gods, and when he began to wander about the whole earth, he started to civilise people without resorting to the force of arms. On the contrary, he controlled the common people by his soft, fluent talk which was as attractive as poetry and music. The Greek historian Plutarch wrote that-according to an ancient Egyptian record - the discovery of music was by a man called 'Manerds' and that name meant to the Ancient Egyptians "the son of the everlasting or the son of eternity". Besides, the ancient Egyptians called 'Horus' the god of poetry and melody. Thus the ancient Egyptians believed that music was a heavenly phenomenon controlled by the law of rhythm and harmony that governs the movements of the tiny planets and stars.

The ancient Egyptians believed that their worldly life on earth and their cosmic life in heaven were created by the cosmic gods - represented at that time by 'Ra', the sun-god. Hence, the ancient Egyptian temple became the centre of worship and rule since the unification of the two parts of the Nile Valley (Lower and Upper Egypt) by king 'Menes' circa 3200 B.C. The priests of the temple represented the cultured elite who were responsible for preserving scientific, artistic and cultural creation, then developing it and passing it down to posterity. Music had always been connected with the daily holy ceremonies at the temple. It was a science related to astronomy. Therefore, it became a global art springing from the religious faith of the ancient Egyptians and an attendant of that faith at the same time.

One of the priests used to specialize in the musical performance at the temple. That was 'Khregat' i.e. the chanting priest. He sang hymns on the occasion of religious demonstrations inside and outside the temple. He used to be called clerk of the holy book' and he was considered one of the connoisseurs of ancient literature.

The ancient Egyptians built their temples to be a domicile for the gods. The temple was called 'house of the god'. There, a statue was erected for the god and before that statue rituals were practised. The temple included rooms for the priests, for purgation, clothes, sacrifices, rooms for singers and dancers in addition

to rooms for musical instruments. In the structure of the temple, there was a yard for holy musical and dancing performances. Each temple had its own musical and dancing troupe for religious service in the temple. There were also similar troupes at princes' homes for entertainment. Music in the ancient Egyptian State was especially quiet and its tunes were low reflecting the religious spirit, whether the music was played inside the temple or at princes' homes. The band consisted of a singer, harp, nay and orgul players. That musical band which was formed in the Old Egyptian State was the oldest band in the history of mankind.

One of the ancient Egyptian musical rituals was that described by the Greek philosopher Plato who visited Egypt and studied theology in the temples. That ritual was 'Dance of the stars' which Plato described as the creation of the gods. The design of that dance was different from the usual prayers in which the priests begged for help from the god. It referred to a different subject, i.e. the embodiment of the 'cosmic system' in the form of a nodding dance performed usually at the yard of the temple before priests and princes only and excluding the public. Christin, in his book 'Dancing', believes that the 'dance of the stars' about which Plato wrote was an artistic structure designed by priests specialised in astronomy. The dance was performed by the priests who made a circle round the altar which represented the 'Sun - Ra'. The priests moved in their glittering clothes from east to west in a regular rhythm while they made with their hands signs that expressed the shapes of the horoscope. After performing those rhythmical steps in a circle, the priests stopped motionless for an interval as a sign of the stability of the earth in its eternal, regular, repetitive cosmic movement round the 'Sun-Ra' which was represented as an altar set in the centre of the priests' circular movement. Beside expressing the ancient Egyptians' cosmic faith by the sacred dance, the priests performed daily rites in the form of anthems chanted as homage paid to the god of the temple. Musical hymns varied according to the religious rites performed by priests according to their specialisation within their procession from the temple to the 'Na'oos' to offer sacrifices and render holy services to the 'Holy of Holies'. Among these anthems were 'illuminating of light' viz. setting fire in the censers, 'carrying censers', 'marching to the gate of the Holy of Holies', 'breaking the seals on the gate of the Holy of Holies, 'opening the door of the Na'oos' and 'kissing the floor before the statue of the god'. When the door of the Na'oos was opened the priest burnt incense as he bowed before the Holy of Holies with the accompaniment of chanting. Some priests specialized in playing religious music at the temple beside a number of priestesses who used the aforementioned instrument 'the sistrum' to accompany the performance of religious rites. This instrument had religious value, hence it was always linked - in the beliefs of the ancient Egyptians- with the names of the gods. This is evident in a papyrus dating back to the fourth century B.C. which included songs for the sister goddesses 'Isis and Nephthys' in addition to a text that 'Osiris', god of eternity, was entitled 'the honest player of the sistrum'.

The historical documents found at Thebes showed the extent of the effect of music on the holy royal queens, wives of god Ra in their practice of religious rites which involved that they play the 'sistrum' at the temple before the god. We also find in the small temple that belongs to Queen Neffertari beside the big temple of Abu-Simbel religious scenes representing the king and his wife as they practise the required rites to god 'Hathur' as the king burns the incense whereas his wife- who is considered the High Priestess- plays music on the 'sistrum'. This musical instrument - as it has already been mentioned - is sacred, and the picture of goddess 'Bast', the idol of Zagazig region who takes the form of a cat, is inscribed on its metal handle together with the head of a cow that represents goddess 'Hathur' to be used at Dandara temple-Qena Governorate - which is the place of worshipping goddess 'Hathur'. At Dandara temple, there are

special rooms for purgation rituals, and rooms for the preservation of musical instruments that were used by priestesses who played music, danced and sang to the rhythmical music of the 'sistrum' at the festival of 'Hathur', goddess of heaven, woman, love and beauty and who came to be called 'Aphrodite' by the Greeks.

The gods of the ancient Egyptians were composed of tripartite groups each of which included 'the god-father, god-mother, and god-son'. The tripartite group of the holy god of Thebes consisted of god 'Amun', goddess 'Mut' and god-son 'Khensu'. Music played an important part in the ceremonial religious processions which were held during the festivals of the ancient Egyptian gods. These ancient festivities, the musical instruments and methods of chanting are still used in the festivals of Egyptians when they celebrate the anniversaries of their saints and holy Sheikhs. In the way of comparison, the ancient Egyptian celebration of the feast of 'Ipet' at Thebes will be compared with the present celebration of the Mouldid of Sheikh 'Youssef Abul Haggag' at the same town which is now called Luxor.

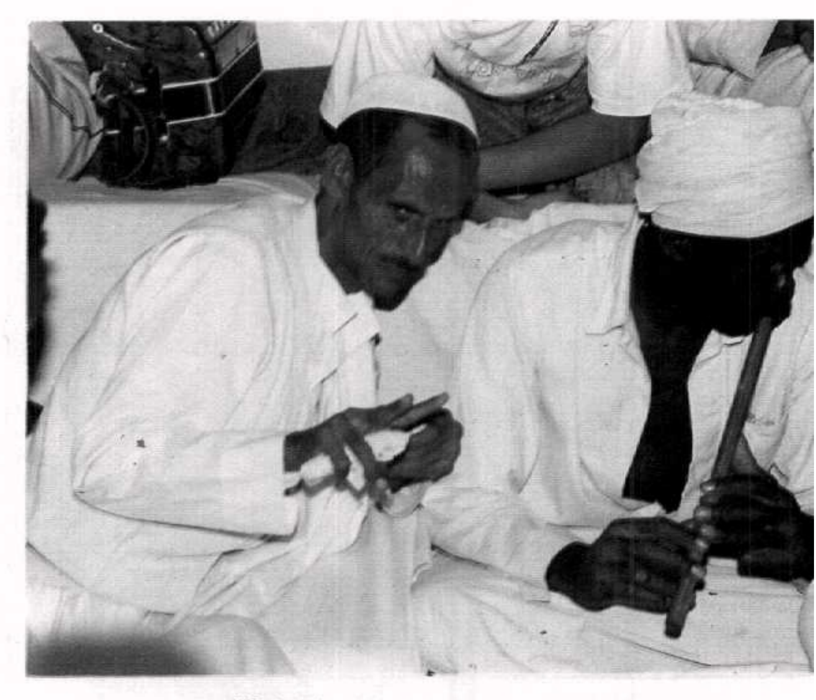
Celebrating the feast of Ipet:

Ipet is the name of the god of pregnancy and childbirth. His temple lies within the large temple of Karnak which is the domicile of the trinity of the sacred god that includes (god Amun goddess Mut, and god Khensu). The custom was that the god-king Amun left his home at Karnak Temple in a big ceremonial procession at the beginning of the new year to have intercourse with the goddess-queen in order to beget godly offspring.

According to the inscriptions at Luxor temple, the celebration begins with an offer of sacrifice to the holy trinity of Thebes (Amun, Mut and Khensu). In the inscriptions, we can see pictures of sacrifices in rooms containing statues of the holy trinity before which king 'Tut-Ankh-Amun' burns incense. Then the priests emerge in four groups carrying on their shoulders a barge in the middle of which there is a 'Naoos' with a wooden statue of god 'Amun' inside it. There were also other boats for goddess 'Mut' and for god 'Khensu'. The priests carrying these boats moved towards the eastern bank of the Nile. Before each boat, there were the fan-bearers and before them the incense-burner walked with a censer from which smoke spread a holy scent.

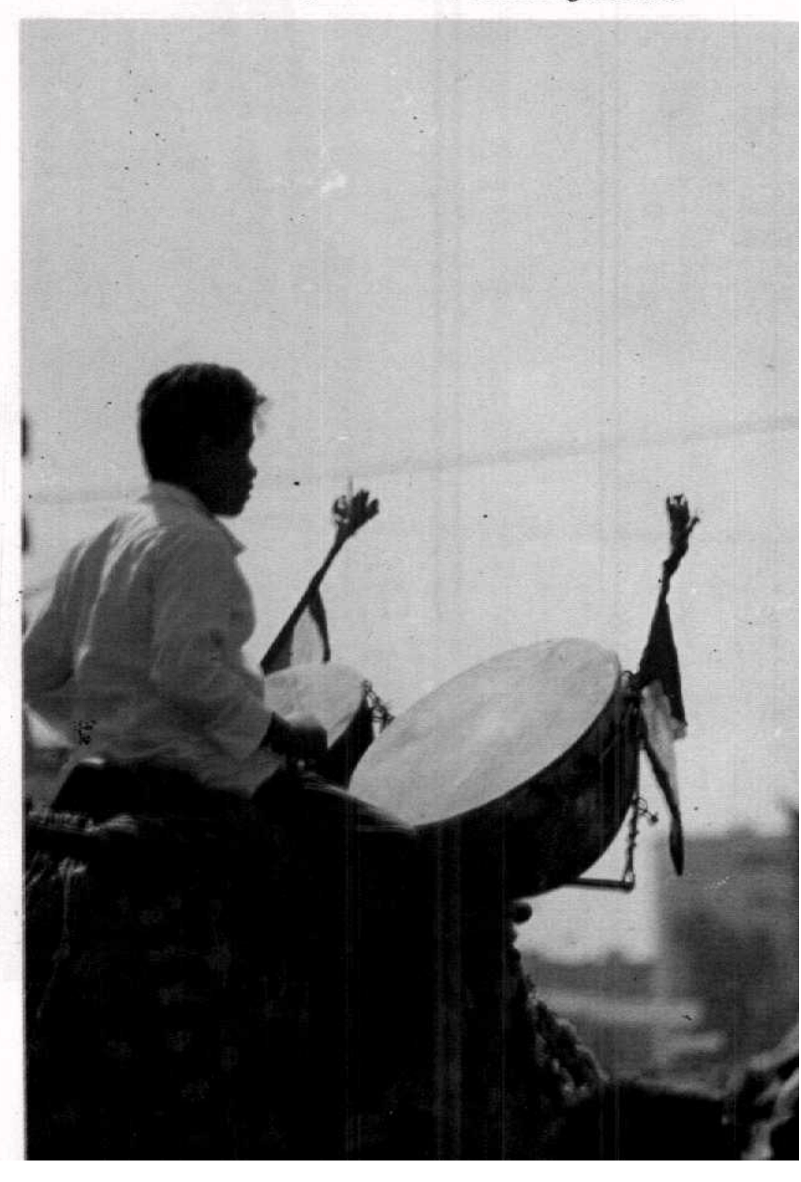
The procession is preceded by the trumpet player and the drummer whereas the Pharaoh walks behind the main procession of god 'Amun' and when the procession reaches the Nile, the priests put the sacred barges on board big ships landing along the bank, then the Nile procession moves towards the temple of Luxor. Another procession is seen on the strand parallel to the Nile comprising a priest and a priestess walking in front and playing the rhythmical music of the sistrum and the brass gongs. These are followed by soldiers in regular rows holding their spears and shields. Among them is the flag-bearers troop before whom there are two royal brides. At the rear of the procession, the priests walk with the player of the 'Oud'. Behind all these, big crowds from Thebes and neighbouring villages walk singing and dancing, celebrating the feast of Amun, whereas the young children clap their hands crying 'O Amun, O Amun'. When the Nile procession reaches the bank opposite to the temple of Luxor, the priests carry the sacred boats and get them out of the big ship preceded by the trumpet player and the drummer. Then they walk into Luxor temple amidst the cries and cheers of the people. At th gate of the temple, a number of priestesses, dancers and women singers stand. After the holy processions enter the temple, the people enter to offer sacrifices to the holy trinity and ask for blessings. Outside the temple, the people stand all the day drinking wine and eating traditional foods while they sing and dance inside tents to protect them from the heat of the sun. The management of the temple distributed the sacrifices among the poor so that everybody became happy.

In the ceremonial procession made on the anniversary of god 'Ipet', music took the form of individual chanting by the priest and group singing by people beside the dances which were accompanied by songs. The musical instruments used were the two-sided drum, the oud and the trumpet. It is noticed that music used in these celebrations was holy music as the ancient Egyptian believed that the musical sound was a godly phenomenon, and that is why he used some musical instruments to accompany the idol king in his boat which bore him, in his death, to float with him in space ascending to heaven to settle down with 'Ra' god of the sun in an eternal life. The ancient Egyptian also believed that the musical instrument on the boat which took the god-king to heaven, had a magic power that helped in overcoming obstacles in the way of the boat in its cosmic trip to the throne of god 'Ra'. There is an ancient famous text referring to the dead king as he sang a magic song praising the sun-god to facilitate for him the way to a complete friendship with that god. The sistrum, gongs, castanets were the most important musical instruments of magic effect from which some were chosen to accompany the king in his trip in the sun-boat to heaven. These instruments are still used in worship in the Coptic Orthodox church.



"Sulamiya" instrument celebrating the Feast

The brass cymbals, the big drums, the small cymbals are still used as instruments of a sacred nature in the processions of the Islamic sufi sects. Chanting the tunes of the Prophet's biography at the Egyptian village is still performed by the reciter with the accompaniment of 'Sulamiya' instrument that looks like the 'nay' instrument. It is made of a pipe of reed with six holes for the different tunes whereas the 'nay' contains seven. A long time ago, the 'Sulamiya', 'nay' and other musical instruments made of reed, were considered to be of an inheritied religious nature since the ancient Pharaonic history. There is an ancient plate at Oxford museum dating back to 3000 B.C. which contains inscriptions showing the god as an animal 'jackal' playing the 'nay' as giraffes and





other animals dance to the tunes of the nay. It is known that the jackal was the symbol of an ancient Egyptian god that was 'god of the west' where the sun sets.

. Thus music was a cosmic sound phenomenon which the ancient Egyptian believed to be the invention of the gød, and that god 'Thoth" the clerk of the gods, the divider of the seasons and the teacher of sciences was the one who invented music. The ancient Egyptian - in the light of his veneration of the sound phenomenon - believed that the material body of the dead person can change into sound according to man's will.

Celebrating the Moulid of Sheikh 'Youssef Abul Haggag':

The celebration of the moulid (birthday anniversary) of Sheikh 'Youssef Abul Haggag' starts from his mosque situated to the east of the Colonnade built by Ramses II at the temple of Luxor. The shrine of Sheikh Youssef Abul Haggag lies inside the mosque. Above the shrine, a colourful ship is hung. It is the same ship which is carried by some members of the Sufi sects after prayers and put on a carriage, then they tie it with ropes and draw it in a procession comprising soldiers, policemen, sheikhs of sufi sects, while they sing 'Zekr' songs accompanied by cymbals. There are also people from Luxor and neighbouring towns taking part in glorification of Sheikh 'Youssef Abul Haggag'.

The Sheikh's ship, which was drawn on the Sheikh's birthday anniversary, was the same ship in which he sailed to Holy Mecca to perform the religious duty of pilgrimage accompanied by sufi songs by the members of the 'Dandrawiya' sect.

In the light of the afore-mentioned comparison between the celebration of the feast of god 'Amun' at Thebes and that celebrating the 'moulid' of Sheikh 'Youssef Abul Haggag' at Luxor, we see that the musical customs in both celebrations are similar in spite of the difference in religious faith. Moreover, the musical instruments and forms of chanting used in the

ancient Egyptian celebration of the feast of "Ipet' are the same which the Egyptians use now in their celebrations of the feasts of Christian saints and in their celebrating the birthday anniversaries of the holy men whose shrines are scattered all over Egypt. Besides, the rhythmical musical instruments of a holy nature which were used in the ancient Egyptian temple have also been used in the Coptic Orthodox church. The same church also adopted the traditions of Pharaonic tunes within the framework of the new rites suitable for the Christian faith of the Coptic Orthodox church.

Second:

Music in the Coptic Orthodox Church.

The establishment of Christianity in Alexandria was by the Apostle Marcus in 62 A.D. Alexandria was then a world centre of science and arts of the ancient Egyptian civilisation as well as the civillisations of the Mediterranean when Egypt was under the rule of the Greek Ptolemies which began in 304 B.C.

The Old Testament had been translated in Alexandria from Hebrew to Greek, as the Greek Ptolemic ruler of Egypt 'Ptolemy Filadelfos' demanded circa 282 B.C. This translation was made by 72 Jewish scribes.

With the spread of Christianity in Alexandria, the scholar 'Pentinus' who was head of the Theologian School at Alexandria translated the Bible from Greek into the Coptic language with the help of his disciples towards the end of the second century A.D. Philosophical and theologian researches flourished in Alexandria such as the branches of music which were linked with philosophy and theology, astronomy which the ancient Greek philosophers learnt from Egyptian temples. One of the most important of those philosophers is 'Pythagoras' - who was philosopher, mathematician and astronomer, and who lived between 580 -500 B.C. He visited Egypt and studied astronomy, music and theology at the temples of Egypt for twenty two years. These studies became, later on, the basic studies of music and philosophy scholars at Alexandria school. They also became the foundation of the development of musical sciences in Europe for centuries, thanks to the scholars of Islamic civilisation who transferred to Europe - in the middle Ages - the Greek musical and astronomical sciences after adding theories of their own . The early Egyptians who adopted Christianity were not aware of the theoretical musical and philosophical studies made by the scholars of Alexandria school, but they were only aware of ritual anthems sung in the Pharaonic temple and outside it .

Those types of music were also practised by the religious Jewish communities staying at Alexandria and other parts of Egypt . Among these communities, there were Jewish scholars specializing in science, philosophy and theology and who were acquainted with what was going on at Alexandria school; those scholars had translated the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek - as it has already been mentioned. This made European music researchers mention in their historical studies that the Christian church took its ritual music from the Jewish temple .Those researchers ignored historical periods older than the Jewish temple in which religious music in pharaonic Egypt was transferred to the Jewish rites, in addition to the fact that this music was commonly use in the ancient Greek religion before the Greeks were converted into christianity during the first century A. D . It is a historical fact that Jewish communities had lived in Egypt for centuries and from them Prophet Moses (peace be on him) was born. It is known that he was brought up at the Egyptian pharaonic court and there he acquired much knowledge about civil, military, political and theological affairs. Jewish communities living in Egypt for generations learnt much about applied scientific bases of agriculture , handicrafts and arts most important of which was music. They were also influenced by thoughts and rituals of ancient Egyptian religions which represented a preliminary stage of the message of monotheism which was a form of inspiration to " Akhnaton. "Then it came to Moses in the form of

a Godly inspiration" and the priests of Pharaoh were among those who believed in it .

The psalms of the Old Testament prove how the Jews used different kinds of musical instruments to accompany human chanting in religious rites. During their stay in Egypt, Jews learnt how to play different musical instruments such as the harp and the " oud " as string instruments, and wind instruments such as pipes and "nay" and percussion instruments such as gongs, cymbals and clapping instruments. When Prophet Moses (peace be on him) and Jewish people left Egypt, they took with them the musical instruments and the tunes of their religious songs , among which were the anthems of "Akhnaton" after they had adapted the text to their religious objectives. This is also evident in the psalms of David which appeared nearly one thousand years after Akhnaton. It is clear from the book of Exodus that the Jews were singing hymns to the music of tambourines as they left Egypt .

It is worth mentioning that the musical instruments and the elements of the musical scale as well as many forms of chanting, which were used in ancient Egypt, were the issue of the intermingle between the ancient civilisation and that of Mesopotamia (Iraq), the Northern region (Syria ,Lebanon, Palestine) and the civilisations of the east from Persia through India up to China. Degrees of similarity in the music of these countriess exceed those of difference . In the age of prophet David the Jewish use of musical instruments of ancient Egyptian origin especially the "nay" reached its peak. In Egypt, there exists till now a kind of " nay " instrument called " David 's node" which is used in sufi chanting in Egyptian villages. The word " node" is the piece of reed from which the " nay " is made. The " David nay "node is long so that it gives a low tone called refrain and it is taken from the"long nay"used in Egypt. This proved that the ancient Egyptian used the low tones in their religious singing in the temple .

The Jews also used the low tone in chanting psalms and other religious texts, a tone which they adopted from ancient Egyptian religious music. These religious chanting forms came to be a common musical heritage of the Jewish temple, the Christian church and the mosque. These chanting forms were common in all christian churches in Egypt, Iraq, syria, Lebanon, Palestine, north African countries, Asia minor, Greece and Rome and afterwards in other countries where Christianity spread its special musical chanting tunes which were coloured by the distinctive qualities of the peoples of these countries.

As Greek was the language used in the performance of the texts of the Old and New Testaments, the Christian church had to adapt its ritual tunes inherited from 56 the ancient Egyptian era to the sound dimensions and rhythmical tones of Greek. It had also undergone the same experience to adapt its inherited tunes to suit the religious Christian liturgy after the texts were translated from Greek to Coptic then to Arabic .

The church of Rome took its musical traditions at the initial stages of its establishment from the churches of Syria , Jerusalem and other eastern churches. Besides, the church of Byzantium - the centre of Christianity in the East and the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire - formed its musical traditions from the music of ancient civilisations in the Mediterranean area . The church of Rome was always trying to take the leadership of the Christian churches in the world and did its best to unify musical rituals in the Christian world; but it was not an easy matter to control musical rituals in the Eastern Christian churches which were considered the main source of church music.

The church of Italy began to crystallize its special musical rites from the essential eastern music in the form of " rhythmical hymns" that were devised by "Ambrose" - Bishop of the church of Milan who lived near the end of the fourth century A. D. He was succeeded by Pope (Gregor the Great)" (590 - 604 - A . D). He is believed to be the Pope who set

down the foundations of the musical rhythmical groupings in addition to the bases set by

Ambrose; and these were taken as the basis of church tunes in the middle era. The historian of music 'Theodor Fini' states in '**The History of Music**' that it is not acceptable to say that the music adopted by the Roman Church for religious singing was devised by 'Ambrose' and 'Gregor the Great', as the basics of this music exist in the Greek music. We may add that Greek music which is older than Roman music is extracted from the music of the Egyptian Jewish temple and from the music of the Coptic church, and all these musics are originally taken from the Pharaonic music.

In the light of these historical facts supported by musical documents inscribed on the walls of ancient Egyptian tombs and temples, we can see how the Egyptian musician from the days of the Old State (3200-2270 B.C.) used religious chanting and how he conducted the singing by movements of his hands which explained to the musicians the flow of tunes up and down, in addition to demonstrating the spaces between the tunes and the pauses. These gestures were known as 'musical recording in the air', and it is called in European musical terminology 'Khironomia'. The German musical researcher 'Hans Hickman' sees that 'Khironomia' moved from the ancient Egyptian temple to the Christian churches and was linked in the Middle Era with the method of recording known as 'Numis', and that 'Khironomia' is still used by the song leader in the Coptic church. 'Hans Hickman' proved these conclusions by analysing the signals of the ancient Egyptian singer to the musicians which inscriptions and wall paintings had registered, and by comparing this analysis with the signs made by one of the leaders of the Coptic church chanting throughout the forties of this century called instructor 'Mikhael'. This guiding method made by the hands to direct singers to the right flow of tunes was transferred from ancient Egypt to the churches of the east and west. The same method is still used by chanting groups of the Islamic Sufi sects. The music researcher 'Hans Hickman' continued his studies of ancient Egyptian music in the light of analysing the sound formation of ancient Egyptian musical instruments found in Egyptian Pharaonic tombs. He also made wind instruments as those used in ancient Egypt. He discovered from his study of these instruments the musical scale which they can play. He also discovered its sound area which includes the eightfold scale that includes the eighth, fifth and fourth musical spaces as a support for the whole musical structure which also includes other musical spaces. This rhythmical formation was transferred from ancient Egypt to the music used in Jewish and Christian worship. The fourth musical space in the scale came to be the most common - so far - in the finale tunes of religious singing at the Jewish temples, the Christian churches and the Moslem mosqus all over the world.

It is natural then that the Coptic church at the beginning took some of the traditions and ways of worship of the Jewish communities in Alexandria . Father 'Matta Al-Meskin' says about these communities:

> The conversion into Christianity of those austere, pious Jewish communities had a great effect on the beginnings of Christianity in Egypt. The adoption of these austere Jews of Christianity paved the way for the acceptance of the deepest meanings of worship and receiving the episcopal tradition with care, as well as the acceptance of the interpretations of the Old Testament broadmindedly, and adherence to the prayers of the hours which were common in the old ritual, together with some rites which were peculiar to the Church of Alexandria from the first century such as the setting of evening and dawn prayers, and it is quite possible that the use of incense and the other rituals has started since the first century. Many scholars believe that 'Discolism' originated in Alexandria and that it is the same as the teachings of the Epistles with some additions written by Jews who converted to Christianity in Alexandria.

Music plays a vital role in the rituals of the Coptic Orthodox church. It is used not as an art to assist these rituals, but as a ritual in itself. It is closely connected with the songs of prayers that include the religious, theologian, faithful contents of the integral concept of the Christian about the Nature of God that he publicly pronounces in chants and hymns. Prayer songs and tunes presented by the church accompanied by the raising of incense are considered ritual reflecting in itself the true sacrifice as the Holy Ghost participates in this holy sacrifice. Hence, the prayer songs and tunes are considered one of the secret rituals which lead to the presence of the unseen 'Christ' in the middle of Christians filling their hearts with belief in His Soul. This is a preliminary step to the presence of the seen Christ in the middle of the church declaring the secret of the bread and wine on the altar. Meanwhile Christians receive with their kindled souls like an illuminated lantern 'Christ' - 'the visible groom' who will get into the soul by the secret of the eucharist. Thus, the church views that the prayer songs and tunes include the secrets of 'Christ' and the strength of his life and acts that are the eternal will of God. Saint Bassilius says in this respect 'What can man have on earth better than following the example of angels as they float in their heaven; thus he begins his day with prayers then he presents dignity and glory to the Creator with tunes and hymns'.

Third:

The Music of Moslem Religious Songs in Egypt

In the light of what we have already mentioned about music in the ancient Egyptian temple, at the Alexandria Jewish temple, and at the Coptic Orthodox church, we can summarize the features which are common among these types as follows :

1. Constructing tunes from small, sound rhythmical units.

2. Single and group chanting forms.

3. Using kinds of string, percussion and wind instruments to accompany religious chanting. The number of these instruments lessened and became confined to some percussion instruments in the Coptic Orthodox church.

4. Music had a definite spirital function to perform for believers. Without this function, music would be rejected, for it would turn into a means of satisfying sensual desire and the pleasure of listening to tunes for their own sake.

Concerning the music of Moslem religious songs in Egypt, we notice that it completely dispenses with the use of musical instruments inside the mosque. It depends on the human voice only. The reason is that the miracle in Islam is represented in the aesthetic voice structure of the language of the Koran. The human voice, reading or chanting this language, can show clearly the beauty of the language of the Koran. This is the only direct, ideal method of expressing the essence of the spirit and meanings included in the 'Suras' of the Koran. Whereas the miracle with Moses (Peace be on him) lay in the magic of his stick, with Jesus (Peace be on Him) in the curing of invalids and bringing the dead back to life, the miracle with Islam (the third stage that completes heavenly religion) is that it reveals the aesthetic values latent in the voice structure of the language of the Holy Koran. The music of the Koran is governed by the rules of reciting the Koran which define the nature of the sound of letters and ways of pronunciation and intonation, means of linking between certain letters, fixing the time for different letters in their different places within the voice structure of words, and determining the voice pauses at the end of certain phrases and sentences. These rules of the aesthetic reciting of the Koran are closely connected with the sound of the language of the Koran.

Rhythmical chanting of the Koran has to conform with these rules, otherwise it will be prohibited in the canonical law of Islam.

The aesthetic voice values of the language

of the Koran is of a divine nature which took the form of inspiration to Mohammed - the illiterate Messenger who could neither read nor write. This language constitutes an aesthetic linguistic miracle the beauty of which no Arab could copy or imitate whatever his genius in language creativeness, whether in poetry or in prose, is. The use of music is confined to the following religious functions:

First : Reciting of the Koran

Secondly : The tune of the 'Adhan' calling Moslems to prayers. The tune of starting group prayers and tuneful signs during the group prayer and the tune of conclud ing this prayer.

Thirdly : Tune of Entreaty.

Fourthly : Tune of 'Allahu Akbar' cited by the group in the Bairam prayers.

Fifthly : The tune of Sufi Presence for the group of the followers of the Hamidia Shazlia Order. The characteristics of each usage will be dealt with separately.

First: Reciting of the Koran

It is generally understood that the Koran can be read aloud without tuning but reciting the Koran includes the use of tuning in the reading of the Koran. In our opinion, the performance of the Koran by the human voice can be done in two basic forms:

First: Reading without the use of tune

Secondly: Reciting the Koran that includes two forms:

A. Speech-reading in the form of a 'quasi-tuneful oration', i.e. in the form of a tuneful text consisting of a small number of rhythms within which the reading moves while using a basic rhythm round which the reading rotates.

B. Reading in a complete rhythmical formulation whose rhythmical dimensions spring from the dimensions of the human voice and the pulses of the rhythm that consists of words, phrases and sentences in the 'Suras' and verses of the Koran.

As the miracle of the Koran lies in its linguistic phonetic structure, it is essential that the man who recites the Koran in its two forms should possess a good voice which consists of:

a- Pure resonance

b- The right performance of the sounds of the language of the Koran with its voice structures and intonation.

The two elements of which the good voice consists exist in man by nature (biologically and physiologically). However, types of voice and its resonance, and standards of good pronunciation differ from one person to another according to the nature of his formation and his family surroundings. If a man, by nature, possesses the components of a good voice, he can develop his voice by training it to perform the language of the Koran according to its rules until the reciter of the Koran with the good voice can attain a spiritual influence on the hearts of his listeners.

Within the framework of the rules of Koran reciting, the sound values of letters can be divided into three parts:

first: Some letters are velarized completely and constantly, according to certain diacritics.

secondly: Letters whose sounds are either velarized or softened according to their position in the phonetic structure of the word and to the voice formation sign (diacritic) that precedes or accompanies the letter itself. For example, the letter 'L' (Lam) is velarized in some examples such as 'Abdullah' and softened in others such as 'Bismillah' (In the name of God) and what is said about this letter can be applied to some other letters.

thirdly: Letters whose sounds are constantly softened.

From what has already been mentioned, we can see how the techniques of intonation can be defined by rules, in other words, we can control the density of letter sounds and modify

them by complete velarization, or medium velarization, or softening. This type of precise voice intonation of letter sounds of Koran language, in addition to word and sound formation, is one of the valuable, aesthetic, musical components of this language.

It is clear, in the light of what has been mentioned about the rules of Koran recital, how it is performed in accordance with the formation of a phonetic structure in an aesthetic, standard mould which can hardly be imitated by any man because it is a vibrating godly pronounced message.

Second:

The 'Adhan' (Call to Prayer) Tune

This tune consists of a complete rhythmical formulation of the words of the text that calls Moslems to prayers. This rhythmical formulation is based on the use of a musical scale consisting of eight tunes separated by seven musical spaces. The amount of vibration of the musical spaces differs from one scale to the other. This results in musical scales which have different spiritual effect. The musical scale commonly used in the rhthmical formulation of the 'Adhan' tune is the 'Hegaz' scale. The musical spaces between the tunes of this scale have such a spiritual attraction that arouses awe. The 'Mu'azzins' who perform the 'Adhan' tune compete in showing their skills. Some of them add to the structure of the tune rhythmical decorative tones that deepen the effect of the tune on the listener. The 'Adhan' tune which is performed by the Egyptian 'Mu'azzins' is the ideal model for the formulation of Koran texts in the Islamic world. Beside the 'Adhan' tune, there are others which are used in group prayers in the mosque on Friday. These tunes are performed after the mosque 'Imam' concludes his speech to call Moslems attending the prayer at the mosque to stand in regular rows in order to prepare to perform prayers behind the Imam. Other tunes are performed during bowing or rising in prayers. All these tunes are performed in a quasi-tuneful elocution which is nearer to ordinary speech than to a fully tuned performance. These tunes are performed by the mosque Mu'azzin who uses them as a sign to his congregation showing the beginning and end of each movement (standing, kneeling and rising) during prayers. With these short, tuneful signs, the Mu'azzen can perform the movements required for the prayers at the same time and guarantee perfect group discipline incorporating the religious group unanimous spirit of the belief in One God. Thus the group prayer at the mosque comprises certain unified movements in regular rows and the short tunes that link the different movements of the prayer with a view to unifying the religious spirit of the Moslem congregation behind the Imam of the mosque.

Third:

Entreaty Tune

Entreaties are Sufi literary texts written in prose or verse in which the Moslem implores God to have mercy on him, protect him, accept his repentance, forgive his sins, deliver his soul from sin, bring him near and fill his heart with His light... Moslems set the texts of these entreaties formulating them in beautiful tunes which are impromptu and rhythmically free without previous preparation, in addition to what the performer has inherited from former gifted impromptu performers. In impromptu tunes, care is given to the partial formation of tunes without giving much care to the general framework or a whole rhythmical mould restricting the flow of the partial tunes. The performer of the entreaty tunes must have a creative musical gift in addition to practical experience and scientific knowledge of Arabic music theories: its origins, branches, derivatives, dimensions of spaces between its musical scales and the spiritual quality of each. Creativity in the field of entreaty tunes depends on variation in the use of more than one scale and the ability to shift from one scale to another, and that the performer should be well trained in discriminating between the spiritual qualities of each scale separately so that he can

use the right scale suitable for the different spiritual reactions which entreaty texts involve. These same qualities are required for the Koran reciter especially when he recites it fully tuned on the basis of shifting from one scale to another. In this type of recital, the spirtual effect of the musical scale has to conform with the meanings of the Koran text. For example, if the Koran text calls for fighting in war, it is not suitable in this case that the reciter used the 'Saba' scale because it has a sad effect; but he can use this scale in another text which involves sadness such as the text which describes the sadness of Youssef's father in the 'Sura' of Youssef.

Fourth:

The Group 'Takbirat' Tune In the Two Feasts Prayers

The tune of the 'Takbirat' with which Moslems call their God by saying in one, powerful, unanimous tune (Allahu Akbaru kabira, Walhamdu Lellahi kathira ...) consists of a special scale composed of five tones. The rhythm of the 'Takbirat' of the two feasts belongs to folk music. The tune is anonymous and it is handed down from one generation to the next by word of mouth. This scale is widely used in most folk music all over the world especially in the Sudan and other African countries. Besides, it is the basic scale in the tunes of Nubia and Arab Gulf States. Analysing the dimensions of the 'Takbirat' tune seems to prove that the tune is older than the words, as the pitches and rhythmical beats do not conform with those of Arabic. The words of that text were set in a spontaneous way within the dimensions of an ancient tune that was still living in the memory of the generations.

Fifth:The Tune of Sufi Presence for the Group of the Followers of the Hamidia Shazlia Order

The Hamidia Shazlia Sect is a Sufi sect established by Sheikh "Salama Hassan El Radi" nicknamed Abi Hamed (1867 - 1939 A.D.) The teachings of this sect belong to the 'Shazlia' Order which was set up by 'Abul Hassan El-Shazli who was born in Morocco in 593 H. and died in 656 H. and was buried at Humaithera in Izab desert which lies between Qena and Quseir.

The word 'Order' is the programme set by the Sheikh to his followers. This programme includes all the aspects of the spiritual activities which comprise:

> Setting up meetings attended by followers on a certain day of the week for the 'rememebrance of God' under the leadership of the Sheikh of the Order in the form of rhythmical chanting performed at the patio of 'Al-Hussein' Mosque. The meeting may take place at the house of one of the followers of the Order, and in this case the number of followers attending should be suitable for the room in that house. In villages, the meeting is held in places specialized for worship and owned by the order. These places are called 'zawaya'.

The musical form of the Sufi Order is divided into two parts:

1. Performing the holy 'Zekr' texts in a quasi-rhythmical way. These texts include the name and glory of God. The recital of the holy texts depends musically on rhythm without using 'the tuneful gradation of the musical scale'. Rhythm here springs from the spontaneous quasi- rhythmical performance and not from the accompaniment of a musical instrument. The 'Zekr' begins with the Sheikh saying, and his followers repeating after him, "God protect us from the Devil. In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful". The quasi-rhythmical performance of this text starts from a basic tune which ascends to the fourth tune, then descends one tune. As it has alrady been mentioned, the fourth musical space - since the days of the religious music at the ancient Egyptian temple, the Coptic Ordhodox Church till the music of the Egyptian Moslem mosque - formed the finale of religious singing. In the

meantime, it formulates the beginnings of these songs.

2. The second part of the musical formation of the Order is chanting which is, to the Sufis, the tuneful recital of poetry. The chanting of Sufi poetry by two groups alternately, or chanting as debate between the single singer and chorus, or the chanting of the single singer-all these types of chanting include both rhythm and scale and from these two elements the tunes of sufi poetry are made. These songs are performed by the human voice alone without the accompaniment of any musical instrument, as these instruments are prohibited in the Order. The Sheikh of the Order leads the singers by light clapping of his hands to guide them to the correct tempo. Besides, the Sheikh performs with his own voice the basic tune that helps the group of singers to perform the right starting tune. When the tune moves from one tone of voice to another, the Sheikh also performs the new basic tune and the singers follow suit.

The musical structure of the Sufi Order includes a period of fully-tuned recital of part of the Koran. Thus chanting in the sufi Order includes single, alternate, and responsive chanting. It also includes ways of quasi-rhythmical and fully rhythmical elocution. This performance has its own rules of intonation. These rules of musical expression, beside the variation in the methods of performance within the musical structure adopted by the Sufi Order, explain to us how the religious musical structure, its peaceful rhythmical contents, and its spiritual involvements which aim at creating a spiritual relation between man who believes and God, is an extension of the qualities and religious function of music throughout the stages of development of religious faith from the Egyptian religion in the ancient Egyptian temple, to the Jewish religion in the Jewish temple, to Christianity in the Coptic Orthodox church, to Islam in the Egyptian Moslem mosque.

One of the Folklore Troupes in the (Moulid) of Sheikh Youssef Abul - Haggag at Luxor.



POPULAR MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

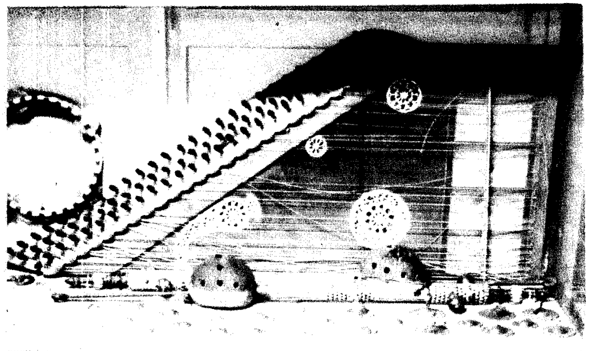
BY FARAG EL - ANTARY

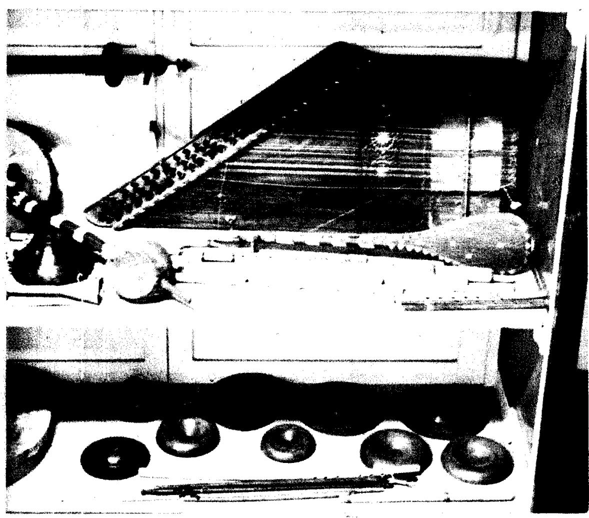


History has always proved that the Egyptian people-from the distant past and throughout the different stages of history - have been famous for cultural musical qualities in the formation, use and tasting of tunes and in making various musical instruments.

The ancient Egyptians-aristocrats as well as common people- were fond of music especially the flowing melodious tune to the extent of legalising and using it in bringing up children in an ideal way, in parties, festivals and banquets, in the services of the temple and in burials. In their inscriptions about their victorious battles, music soldiers are portrayed as they beat their drums and blow their trumpets. The ancient Egyptians did not content themselves with the music played in festivals and on formal occasions, but they always looked for opportunities for banquets, evening chat sittings to which they invited their brethern and friends to food and drink while they listened to music and songs and watched dancers. Many adopted the playing of music and singing as a hobby. In a scene at the tomb of 'Mararuka' - one of the noblemen of ancient Egypt-at Sakkara, we can see how this nobleman relaxed at his home enjoying the music played on the harp by his wife.

In the past 150 years, archaeological re-





A collection of musical instruments. They include the drum and the rabab in their different types, the castanets and the tanbour

searches in Egypt and in other countries of the East, provided us with many valuable documents concerning the progress of eastern civilisation and the influence of Egypt on other civilisations including that of Greece. It has become known that Pythagoras, the Greek who devised the musical scale for the whole world, learnt it from Egypt during his long stay there for study and that the Greeks borrowed from Egyptian music the formation of melodious harmony in what is known to them as the Dorian and the Phrygian. People read and are still reading Plato's texts in his 'Republic' and in his laws, and how he was affected by what he had eye-witnessed from the culture of Egypt, and the music he had listened to there, how he persisted in inviting his own people to make use of Egyptian music in educational programmes and in aesthetic appreciation in his country. It has also become known from the incidents of ancient Egyptian history, that Egyptian emigrants who escaped the persecution of one of the Ptolemies, taught in their exile Greeks and others the principles of musical theory, ways of playing on various musical instruments... All this has become clear and evident, and all attempts to obscure or deny the precedence of the ancient Egyptian civilisation in this respect are suspect, rejected and futile.

Researchers were guided by 'Musical Archaeology' in the possiblility of repairing historical instruments or reproducing them and listening to their music, beside the old instruments existing in Egyptian and foreign museums-all this resulted in emphasizing the fertility of Egyptian culture in music and the amazing formations and styles in addition to the manufacture of string, wind and percussion instruments which were limited and purely Egyptian at the beginning. But, after Egypt had got into contact with other countries and people, the old fundamental instruments were exposed to innovations as it will be referred to later with special emphasis on what the people adhered to either by inheritance or adoption to preserve their heritage and express their privacy in space and time.

First: From the Sources of the Past

I- In the Ancient Egyptian Eras

A. In the Old State (3200 B.C.-2100 B.C.)

The general trend of music was calmness which led to a feeling of quietude and balance. The singer, as he was shown in paintings and inscriptions, hardly opened his mouth as he sang, dancers' steps were slow and serene. In-

struments, according to the number of their strings or holes, were not of the type that gave out sharp or sonorous tunes. But they were of the kind that nourished the healthy man to remain healthy. This type complied with the requirements of the temples and worship inspiring awe and respect within the framework of that old quintuple pontatonic scale. Example of these instruments are:

String instruments: the harp which bore the Pharaonic name 'Tibony' (but we still use the Persian name ' Kink') had five strings. Its size made it possible for the musician to handle it while it was directly on the floor or on a base.

Wind instruments: (1) the long and short single pipe which bore the Pharaonic name 'Khanouy' (though we still use its Persion name 'Nay'). In Volume VIII of Flutto's "Description of Egypt', he says that Egyptians used to call the long pipe 'djonoues' which is painted on the walls of Giza cemetry. The short pipe was called 'Jinglaros' and it appears in the drawings of Beni Hassan caves.

(2) The double 'urgul' pipe.

Percussion instruments: A group of Pharaonic beating instruments called 'Kenken'.They are articles made for group clapping by beating with bars, arms, feet and with what is known as clapping sticks which we shall meet soon in the contemporary traces of Fayoum... in addition to the clinging of bells, gongs and rattles beside clapping of the hands the best example of which we can see in the compound rhythms of the Nubians.

B. In the Middle State (2100 B.C. - 1700 B.C.)

The trend of music and instruments remained as it was in the Old State; But Asian innovations appeared for the first time such as the 'kinara' instrument and shoulder castanets. However, they did not become popular before the Modern State. In percussions, some kinds of drums and the two types of sictrum - the bending and the bell-came into existence.

It is worthy of mention that the Hyksos - the Asian shepherds - invaded Egypt in that period and ruled it during the reign of the fifteenth and sixteenth and half of the seventeenth dynasties. They took as their capital 'Awareer' which lay at the site of the present 'San' near to the east of 'Fakous'. It is believed that they kept their traditions, customs and idols at the beginning, but they soon changed, became pan-Egyptian, spoke the language of Egypt and worshipped her gods.

C. In the Modern State (1555 B.C. - 712 B.C.)

This State began its reign with the expulsion of the Hyksos by Ahmus. It was afterwards ruled by the powerful Pharaohs who penetrated into the Peninsula till they reached Asia Minor, thus bringing Egypt in contact with the Asian civilisation which had its effect on music and its instruments resulting in violent, loud and quick expressions in addition to the following innovations:

In Strings: the harp became bigger with more decorations and twenty strings. There also appeared the small types of it-in the size of the Nubian 'tamboura' or the Canal 'Semsemeya'. It bore the names of shoulder castanets, bend, angular, and prop.

The Asian Kinara and Tambour came to be widely used. (Because the tambour has a tall neck and a short one, some historians were confused and mistook the type with the short neck for the Arab 'Oud').

In Wind Intruments: The number of pipe stops increased to seven giving out the tunes of the present septenary scale. The loud double-pipe replacd the reed of the quiet, single 'nay'.

In Percussions: Cymbals came into existence, and drums, gongs and castanets grew more than before.

The Late Era of This State: (712 B.C. - 332 B.C.)

After the Twenty - Fifth Nubian Dynasty came to an end, the Persians succeeded in invading Egypt and succeeded in forming dynasties: 27 for 187 years, afterwards nine years more in the 30th Dynasty till 332 B.C. All historical sources agree that the spread of the Persian musical trend annoyed the Egyptians so greatly that priests resisted it and warned Egyptians against it. The Pharaonic palace was careful enough to keep in the court the Pharaonic musical band in addition to the Persian procurement band. We read in Volume VII of 'Description of Egypt' about the terrible noise and roaring of the Persian music, and about how Plato condemned it when he compared it with the Egyptian serene music, and how it hurt the feelings by its great variation, moaning, arousing lust and inciting evil and vice, and impairing the listener's vitality.

In the Ptolemic or Greek Era: (332 B.C. - 30 B.C.)

We cannot say much about Hellenic music due to shortage of sources. However, it played an important part in the lives of the high and the low classes. This era witnessed the invention of the water organ by the Alexandrian engineer Ktesibius in 256 B.C. Greek names were also given to the different types of pipe: the single came to be called 'Monoaulos' and the double 'Diaaulos'.

In the Roman Era (30 B.C.- 395 A.D.)

Primarily, the Coptic church has to be proud of its glorious role in preserving the ancient Egyptian qualities in all its hymns and rites without any Persian impurities or Greek or Byzantine interference, as eminent theologians emphasize.

Names of instruments remained as they were with the Greeks. The Romans were greatly interested in types and instruments of military music - a matter which led to the appearance of the lyre with seven strings which was called Tistudo. The Romans also gave the name 'Cympalon' to Alestrom rattles using the same letters of the word 'Cympal' which is now given to the big discs used nowadays in military music and contemporary orchestras.

There is nothing to say about Coptic musical instruments as this music depends only on the larynx in singing with accompaniments of the tambourine or triangle.

II. Music In Islamic Civilisation

The Arab Conquest of Egypt took place in 640 A.D. Since then, Egypt gradually became culturally part of the other countries conquered by the Arabs as far as music was concerned taking into consideration the following factors:

(1) The nearness of the Ommiad capital to the boundaries of the Roman nation resulted in the embracing by royalty of musical arts. It has been recorded that the Arab singer Said Ben Misgah left during the Ommiad era to the Roman countries of Syria and Persia to learn the "Barbit and Estocosian' tunes and study how to play the pipes and know the theoretical rules. He returned to Hijaz to teach his students what he had learnt.

(2) During the Abbassid reign, in addition to the Persian influence, the Greek cultural trend started to have its impact on the terminology and rules of music as a result of the vast translation movement which took place during the reign of Caliph El-Mamoun. Then the Turkish trend began to play its part from the beginning of the rule of Caliph El Motassem (1813-1833 A.D.)

(3) In addition, there were other influences on musical terminology and instruments according to every Caliph and through travel and expeditions.

Thus there were different names for the same instrument, for the same tune, scale or tempo. Musical instruments that were made in Egypt or elsewhere and which were sold or bought in its markets especially 'El-Anmateyeen' market (which - according to Makrizi - lies next to Bab-Zwela) were numerous and variable.

According to Ayoubi and Memeluk references, these instruments were as follows:

El-Oud: had 25 different names

El-Jink: the Persian and the ancient Egyptian types.

El-Seneter & El-Kanun: two names for one thing. El- Kanun is Syrian and El-Seneter is ancient Egyptian.

El-Rabab: was called' kamanga' in Persian, and 'Arnaba' in Tukish:

El-Tanbour: of two types: El-Khurasani and the Arabic.

El-Shababa: is the pipe with its two types: the long and the short. It had nearly 25 names, most famous of which is the Persian name 'Nay'. The Urgul pipe: bore the names 'donay', 'Mausul', 'Muzdawag; 'Muthanna', and 'Makrun'.

El-Shuaybiya: a wind instrument of seven pipes of reed of different lengths fixed horizontally. The musician moves it to the right and left between his lips while he is blowing it. In olden times, it was used by shepherds and it was named after Prophert 'Shuayb' (may peace be on him.)

Drums and Tambourines: of different kinds, sizes and shapes. Tambourines were supplied with metal flakes.

Tublakhanat: This is the Persian name for the military music band. It included trumpets, pipes, drums, gongs and brass castanets.

After Egypt fell victim to the Turkish rule in 1517, scientific, cultural and economic progress was checked; skilful artisans were taken to Istanbul with their precious products, loans were collected and the country's revenue was directed to the Sublime Porte periodically. The Egyptian people, consequently, turned to themselves expressing their complaints in sad music played by their instruments which they inherited or adapted to their own use. Popular instruments did not change though Mohammed Ali the Great built schools for military music for teaching theories and training on European instruments with a view to modernizing the Egyptian army.

A comparison made between popular musical instruments and classical ones shows that the "oud' contributes to popular folkloric music in lower Egypt. We also notice that trumpets of military cavalry (the Bost horn) and bagpipe music have come to be newly used in weddings in big cities. The future alone will show researchers to what extent Egyptians will adhere to these practices and whether they will be part of the list of our popular heritage.

Second: Contemporaneous Handling

Wind Instruments

First: From Direct Wind Instruments: Salamiya Whistle:

If the word 'whistle' is given generally to any wind instrument made of reed or particularly to the 'nay'instrument, it is surprising that we - in Egypt - still prefer to use the Persian word 'nay' instead of using the Arabic word 'kasaba' or 'kosaba' or using the Pharaonic name 'Chnove' or the contemporary folkloric name 'Salamiya' and Kawal. It is very probable that the numerous Persian names given to our musical instruments are due to the success of the Barmaks in spreading Persian culture in the Abbassid Empire to demonstrate Persian dominance over every Arab walk of life.

To begin with, the most famous wind instrument in our popular music is the 'Salamiya' whistle which is a reed open at both ends with six stops. The musician holds it slanting and in a position that makes the vibration of the air blown into it easy. These instruments vary in length according to the depth and loudness of the tunes, and in expectation of any change in scale or tone. Consequently, in the instruments of the band there must be, beside the 'salamiya', another pipe smaller in size called 'kawal' that issues that loud octave of the primary tunes, thus making the combination more integrated and more musical.

We may spot in the following remarks some of the differences in the making of this instrument, its tunes and usages in some Egyptian areas:



One of the Folklore Troupes in the governorate of Luxor

** With the Abada and Bishariya tribes in the Eastern Desert, the instrument is made of ordinary reed with holes for playing the five-fold pentatonic scale which they are familiar with as it is the only scale they know so far.

** In Siwa Oasis, The instrument is made of gun barrels after cutting them and making holes in them. Then they blow intermittent currents of air into them resulting in a continual tuneful flow mixed sometimes with side sharp whistle. From Southern Sinai, some records dating back to 1968 proved that the instrument with its six holes move in a tuneful area not exceeding the fourth musical space. Traditionally, women and shepherdesses were always chosen to play this instrument in time of peace and safety. In case of danger or emergency, its tunes were used in sending cypher messages, and men only were chosen to play the instrument.

The inscriptions of the Old and Middle States demonstrate two types of the instrument - an exämple of beauty and harmonious stops - one is long, and the other short. Experiments have proved that they produced the quintuple scale. Moreover, Pharaonic models of the same instrument were found in 1890 by Professor Flindres Pitric, and in 1903 by John Garstang. Inscriptions dating back to 2000 years B.C. in one of the tombs of Giza Pyramids proved the existence of a whole group of this instrument in one of the Pharaoh's parties. All this proves that the reed with holes - whatever its name in the past or at present - was Egyptian after all.

Second: Blowing with Single Reed:

The Orgul:

The orgul is one of the wind instruments which our Pharaonic history had known since the days of the Old State (3200-2000 B.C.). It is something like a double clarinet which is made of two pipes of reed with a mouthpiece for each, supplied with a small bit that causes the vibration of the musician's blow of air. One of the pipes is short with six holes for making the tune. The other is longer and can be lengthened by adding more reeds to it. It performs the counterpoint to the first tune. It is the same instrument which was known to the Ayubites and the Memeluks under the names of 'Donay', 'double nay', 'double pipe' and 'makroun'. They were continually handled by boatswains according to what the orientalist Edward Lane mentioned about the customs and manners of modern Egyptians in the days of Mohammed Ali the Great. According to length, the orgul can be classified into two types: the short one whose length ranges between 60 and 85 centimetres, and the long one ranging between 180 and 250 centimetres. Between these two types, there is 'Tormai' orgul whose length ranges between 40 to 60 centimetres supplying both pipes with two funnels that magnify the sound. There is also the type known as 'Urma' with two pipes equal in length (60 centimetres). Finally we find the shortest type in which the length ranges between 25-40 centimetres and it is called 'Zummar' and 'Zummarah'. Orgu are commonly made and manipulated in the countryside of Lower Egypt. They give it names according to the number of holes. But Sinai bedouins call it ('Magrun"- Makrun) or 'offata'. The name 'Magrun' is also given to it in 'Siwa' oasis and its villages. Specialized researches emphasize that the Siwa 'khamsia' orgul originated at Mersa Matruh and bedouins there brought it with them when they came to the oasis or passed by it.

Third: With Double Reed:

The Pipe 'Mizmar':

Mizmar is an instrument that looks like the contemporary oboe. It is locally made of apricot or hazelnut wood. It is a conic pipe at the top of which a double-reed mouthpiece is fixed for blowing. At the bottom it ends with a mouth that looks like a bell for magnifying

The Baladi Drum



sound. The pipe has seven holes on the outer surface and the eighth is at the back upper part. All the Arabs were familiar with the mizmar and used it in their festivities in the middle era and gave it names like 'Sirna', 'Sirnai' and 'Zorna'. Owing to the violence of its loud sounds, it was especially used with horns and drums in Islamic millitary music bands which were called 'tublakhanat', according to the Persian system, which was contemporaneous with the French Campaign in some of the Egyptian Governorates and which Mohammed Ali the Great decided to cancel when he decided to modernize the Egyptian army. Consequently, he established the army music school at 'Khankah' on a European basis in teaching rules and theories, and in training on the most modern instruments for the sake of providing the army with its graduates. Hence, it was enough for the mizmar to play its part in activating our popular music which makes use of three types of mizmar. The smaller in size usually performs the tune whereas the proportinally bigger performs a repetition of the refrain. Its most common names are given according to size. It is usually used with big drums (or baladi drums) in the open air, at squares, in open areas and streets to accompany wedding processions or the dancing of horses or to play the 'Samer' music.

String Instruments

First: With Bowed Strings

Rabab:

A century ago, the 'rabab' instrument was similar in importance to the violin in Europe, and it became afterwards popular. Its box is taken from a hollow coconut covered with leather. It is prepared for playing music by adding strings made of horse hair and a bow that looks like the violin bow. There are two types of rabab: the first has one string for the accompaniment of popular epics, the second has two strings for the accompaniment of troupes or old-fashioned bands. Historical researches point out that rabab moved from Khurasan to Arab countries. In the days of Abu Nasr El-Farabi (870-950 A.D.) the instrument had one or two strings, the Egyptian type was the oldest. During the Memeluk era (1250 - 1517 A.D.) it was supplied with four strings.

The importance of the artistic and social role of the rababa bard is clear in orientalist Edward Lane's book **'Customs and Manners of Modern Egyptians'** in which he states that during the nineteenth century there was nothing more amusing to the Egyptians at cafés or parties than listening eagerly to rababa bards reciting verses of popular epics from memory, not from books or texts, with intervals of rabab tunes as well as the introductory tunes with which they started their recitals. The rabab had titles such as the 'bard's rabab' and 'Abu Zeidi rabab' named after Abu Zeid El-Hilali Salama and other names taken from the Arabian Nights. Edward Lane concludes that modern Egyptians still keep the bedouin sentiments which inspire them with courage resulting from listening to stories about war.

As for the double-string rabab, it was the only string instrument that existed in bands till 1867 especially on the famous occasion of 'the Children's Wedding' for the marriage of the three sons of Khedive Ismail who gave orders that festivities go on in Cairo forty days and nights. The occasion called for the formation of a big troupe of top musicians and singers under the leadership of 'Master' Hassan El-Gahili (1842-1908 A.D.) who was master of rabab players in his days and who was the special favourite of the Khedive. Among the single music players was Antuan El-Shawa from Aleppo who participated by playing on his 'Roman' violin who astounded the guests in the imperial hall by his sweet tunes and his complete control of the instrument which was complicated, and it was known that 'Romans' only could handle it. Gold pounds were soon thrown at the violin player and his band of which

Shawa got 1700 pounds. From that day, fear of handling the instrument came to an end, band players began to use it instead of the rabab.

The use of the rabab came to be confined to some of the villages and hamlets of Qena Governorate. The famous Roman expert Tiperio Alexandro in his academic analysis of the qualities of popular music and songs which he gathered from the different parts of the country in 1967, expresses his great appreciation of the skill of the inhabitants of Qena in handling the rabab and their incredible performance. He refers, for instance, to the talents of 'Master Mit'al' and his band stating that he is an artist who knows how to touch the strings with his fingers, with the bow and even with the stick of his bow, and how he innovates in creating soft variations, how his band which took part in the recording was formed from well-trained individuals that could fulfil in the end the requirements of a harmonious performance of a highly rich popular heritage.

Second: Plucking with Fingers:

The Tanbour or Lyre (Quithar)

This is a special artistic landmark of the region of Nubia. It has five metal strings, and an echoing body of wood covered with leather. It produces tunes of the African Pentatonic scale to accompany songs and dances. In Nubia, Akilat Arabs excel in playing it. But the Ababda and Bisharia tribes in our Estern desert make and use it. It is also a common denominator in the formation of the Zar troupes for presenting the African types of singing and playing of music.

Intense musical studies carried out by the French Campaign scientists refuted the claims that this instrument was not African and rejected the Asian name of 'Kinara'. 'Description of Egypt' stressed the name Quithar as the Nubians who lived round the first Cataract during the Campaign called it Quisar, whereas the people of Egypt called it 'the Barbarian Quitara'.

Studies show that its five strings were made of camel bowels, then they are tied to one of the sides of its frame which the Nubians call gos (curve). Scientists made an experiment to identify the Nubian method of tuning the instrument. So, they brought one and separated its strings and asked a Nubian musician who saw nothing of what they did to fix the strings again and tune them. He did that automatically and tuned the strings to their Nubian pentatonic tones. This proves their definite, inherited, traditional originality. When scientists traced their ancient origin, they proved that the instrument was originally Ethiopian and that it was common among the peoples of Central Africa under the name 'krar', then it was introduced into Egypt with the property of Africans and Ethiopians who came to Egypt for work and settling down.

Thus, the African origin of the Tanboura of our people In Nubia and the Eastern Desert is proved. The claim that it was originally Pharaonic and bore the Asian name 'Quinara' has been refuted. In Volume one of **'History of Egyptian Civilisation'**, Egyptian archaeologist Dr. Mohammed Gamal Eddin Mokhtar proves that the Quinara was a wooden instrument of Asian origin. Orientalist Henry Farmer in his book about the history of Arab music states that the Quinar is a Hebrew name of the Hebrew and Nabatia Quinur instrument.

The inscriptions on the cemetry of Beni Hassan about the 'Quinur' instrument at the end of the Old State and the beginnings of the Middle State show a group of Asians with their distinct features and clothes crossing Egyptian borders as they carry in their hands or on their donkeys the presents of their people to the Egyptian rulers in friendship and flattery.

The history of our music mentions that the Quinara appeared for the first time at the end of the Old State and the beginnings of the Middle State and that it did not become common till the age of the Modern State and this is proof enough that the Asiatic Quinara became well known after the empire of the Pharaohs

had expanded in Asia. This led to a cultural interference in the sphere of musical instruments to the extent that the Pharaoh had in his palace an Asian musical band beside the Pharaonic one. The Quinara became common and spread by the efforts of its people and not before that.

Semsemeya:

The Semsemeya instrument - which may be called the Canal Tanbura - is only a twin of the Nubian Tanbura. It emigrated with the Nubian manpower who took part in the forced labour of digging the Suez Canal. Then it settled there with its people to murmur to them their madrigals, thus relieving the hardships of estrangement and digging in Port-Said, Ismailia and Suez. Afterwards, it was subjected to some changes that made it more suitable to the music of the region.

For instance, the tuning of its five strings deviated from the Pentatonic scale to the diatonic one in its inclusion of the tune of the third neutral space, and the fixing of its strings came to be performed by the twisted wooden keys instead of the Nubian cloth rings. Fishermen at Al-Arish and Al-Tur could make its echoing box from tin cans and they made its strings from electric wires.

Semsemeya- in comparison with all our instruments - is the only one that produces its tunes accompanied by a self-tempo produced by plucking the strings during playing the music. This tempo reaches the ear as a 'murmur' which means in Arabic 'tamtama' and from this word, the name of the instrument was taken 'Tamtamia' after which the pronunciation was altered to "Semsemeya".

Thus-the Semsemeya spread all over the Canal Zone forming a distinctive stock of madrigals and dances which still bear traces of the Nubian movement and expression in songs which become famous among the fishermen of Al-Arish and Tur-Sinai. Such songs incite enthusiasm expressed by hand clapping, rising for dancing, drumming on anything near at hand in addition to the voices of the choir. In this way the Semsemeya crossed the Red Sea to its eastern ports to play its role there often with its Egyptian features at the harbour towns of Yemen and the Saudi Zone of Jizan.

Percussion Instruments

It is taken for granted that percussion instruments (an example of which is clapping hands and beating of feet) are the oldest musical instruments known in history and that the oldest civilisations had started in some countries of Asia and Africa, and since there is no civilisation without music, it is true then that the Afro-Asian countries are the oldest store in the world for making percussion instruments and rhythm devices. Egypt, being the birthplace of the oldest and most illuminating civilisation, was herald in making percussion instruments and using them. Its heritage still involve the following creations:

(A) Nubian Clapping:

Clapping is known to play so far in the history of any people a role whose artistic value varies from simplicity to complexity. The Egyptian people-like other people all over the world - clap their hands in participation of simple rhythms of songs and dances. But our people in Nubia, especially in the Fadigat tribe, devise a new form of rhythm by using the hands and feet beside the beats of the tambourine that result in a music wonder and prove the conventionality of its African origin. Elements of drum-beating intervene in the formation so that these elements swing in the interlude or follow each other or conflict or clash, the total of which results in what may be called compound rhythm which is a branch of higher musical studies but which the Nubians create instinctively.

In Dr. Ezz Eddin Ismail's book **20 Days In Nubia** we can read about the wonders of this rhythm, that it is not a mere primary rhythm but it takes the same form and type of a melody in which hands and feet alternate the beats of the rhythm causing the incidence of another inner rhythm represented in the variance be-

tween interlude and finale, between clapping of hands and beating of feet.

Needless to say that we - Arabs - have great eagerness towards all rhythmical devices which are the remains of these virgin African trends also known to the countries of the Gulf and the Arab Peninsula, and is academically known as 'Polyrhythmic'. Musicians who are creative in this field charge the highest fees for specialists in their recordings and in the playing of their bands.

(B) Clapping Sticks:

Since the days of the first Pharaonic dynasty (3200 B.C.), Egypt has been famous for the creating of many rhythmical clappings in the form of hands, arms, heads and pairs of sticks. Musical folklores in the region of Fayoum still use the same devices. When the inhabitants of Fayoum organise themeselves to perform their most famous folkloric melodies, they sit face to face in groups of fours, each holding a stick. When they start singing, they beat their sticks in such an arrangement that keeps the unity of the rhythm of the song they chant. In this way, clapping sticks - which is a Pharaonic heritage - continues to play its part conveying to the contemporaries the greetings of their ancestors while the present generation resume their journey to carry their creations to the future generations in years to come.

(C) Darabuka:

Darabuka is a popular drum in the form of a hollow cylinder which is often made of pottery or wood inlaid with sea-shell. The hollow cylinder widens at its middle until it ends in the shape of the mouth of a bell round which a piece of light goatskin lightly tanned, or fish-skin, or nylon, is strained.

There is an enlarged type of darabuka called 'Doholla'. The player of both types leans the instrument to his knees or hangs it horizontally to his shoulder in front of his chest.

The making of the darabuka differs from the Egyptian countryside to the city. Villagers stick the piece of hide with glue whereas city dwellers fix it with a circle of strong strings and beautify the article and glaze it with brown paint made of metal oxides. Darabuka spreads in Egyptian popular districts and in the country where it is used in folkloric bands. In all villages it is a basic element in come-together parties, in weddings and on different joyful occasions. Since the nineteenth century, it has appeared in the company of wandering comedians, with belly-dancers, with boatswains and for the entertainment of slave - girls in palaces. It is still used in our lives in villages and popular districts, where there is always a woman who is a clever drummer who inspires listeners with joy and receives from them clapping and yodels.

In our modern times, one more contribution has been added to the role of the darabuka first by taking part in popular bands and performing traditional Arab pieces, and secondly by drawing the interest of European academicians to study its possibilities and benefitting by them. An example is Contemporary German composer, Siegfried Fink, who prepared a training book for that instrument (methode) and wrote a pamphlet entitled 'Suit Solo'in which he gave eastern names to the three movements calling them respectively: "Saleh Talaye', 'El-Maridany' and 'Al-Azhar'.

(D) Types of Tambourine:

The tambourine is an ancient instrument that goes back in history to the Pharaonic Modern State. It was mentioned in the Bible. It still keeps its reputation in all popular bands and in traditional Arab music bands.

The tambourine has a wooden frame covered on one side with a tender skin. The frame is supplied with circular pairs of metal flakes to issue the resounding clanging of music.

There are different types of the instrument according to diameter such as 'Al-Hana', 'Al-Mazhar', 'Al-Bandir' and 'Al-Tar'. All these types do not have the metal flakes and they are used in Upper Egypt especially in the neighbourhood of Aswan for the purpose of accom-

panying dances. Apart from these areas in Egypt, they are basically used to serve the processions, religious songs and Zekr rings of Sufis and Dervishes.

(E) Nakrizan and Baza:

In Upper Egypt, there is a type of nakrizan drum with its brassy pot whose diameter is about 30 cm. It is covered with strained skin and the musician hangs it round his neck leaning to his chest so that he beats it with a thin pair of wood sticks.

The Sufi sects in their processions and zekr rings use a smaller type called Baza drum which is like that used by the traditional Ramadan night crier who used it in awakening sleepers to take their 'sohour'.

(F) The Baladi Drum:

It is the biggest of popular drums in size. Its wooden frame is supplied on both sides with a strain of tanned, scratched hide. The musician hangs it round his neck in order to beat one of its sides with a wooden racket and the other with a thin stick.

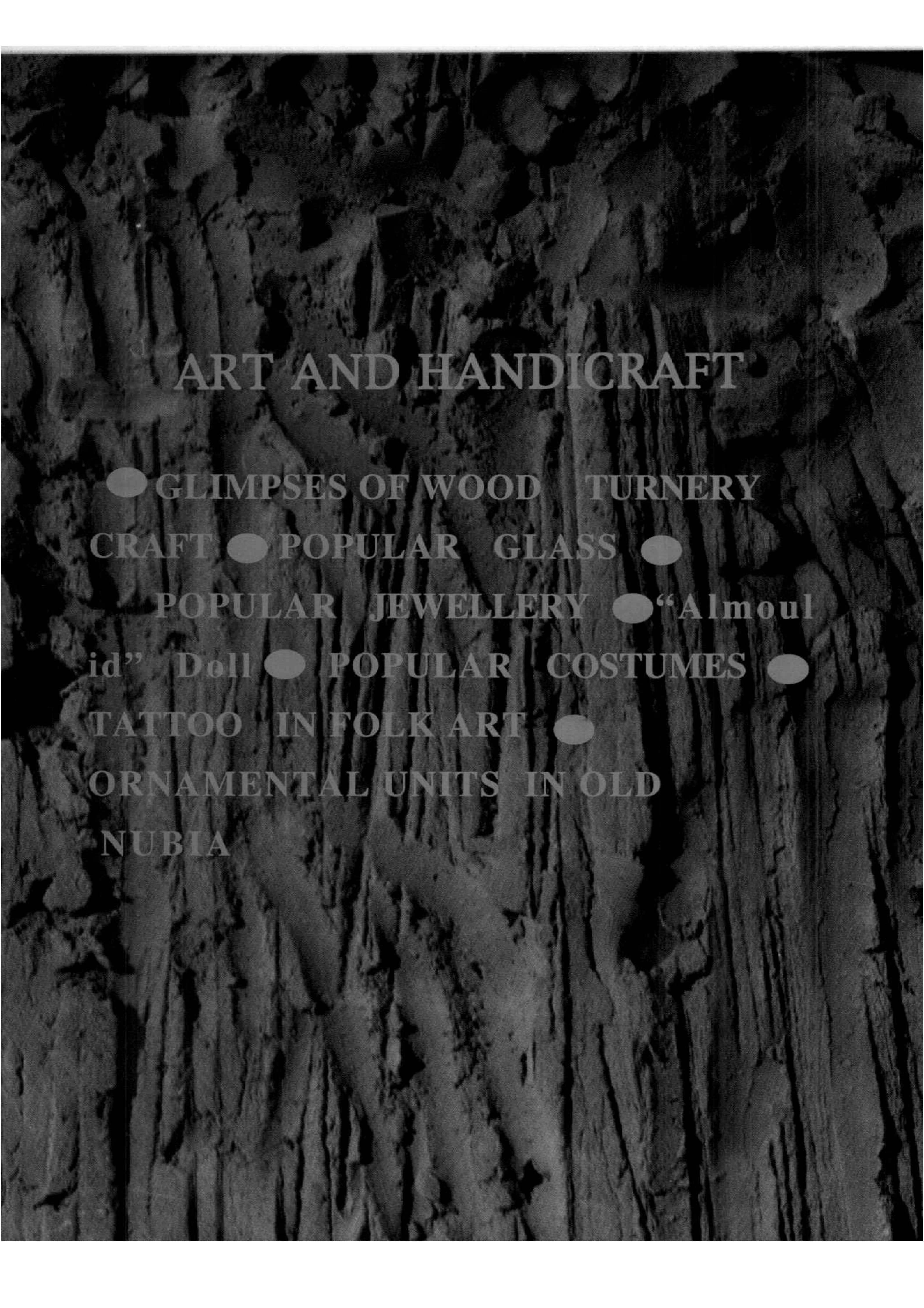
Owing to the big size of the large drums and the spreading echo of the sound, its use is preferable in the open areas to accompany the pipes of horse dancing and in processions and weddings.

(G) Metallic castanets, Kasat and Triangle:

These are made of a sounding metal. There are different kinds of castanets according to their size. The smallest (diameter 6 cm) is used by women dancers by fixing them in the thumb and index fingers of both hands, then they move their fingers to make them clash and ring during the dance with the echo of the required rhythm. There is also the 'Tura' type (diamater 10 cm.) which is commonly used in popular music in the Delta area especially in Zekr rings, and the processions and mawalid of Sufi sects. It is worth mentioning that the Coptic Church and the Islamic Sufi sects similarly use castanets in their music with difference in names: whereas Sufis call them 'Kasat', in church services they are called 'Nakous' which is accompanied by the beats of the European Triangle which is mispronounced 'Tilianto'.

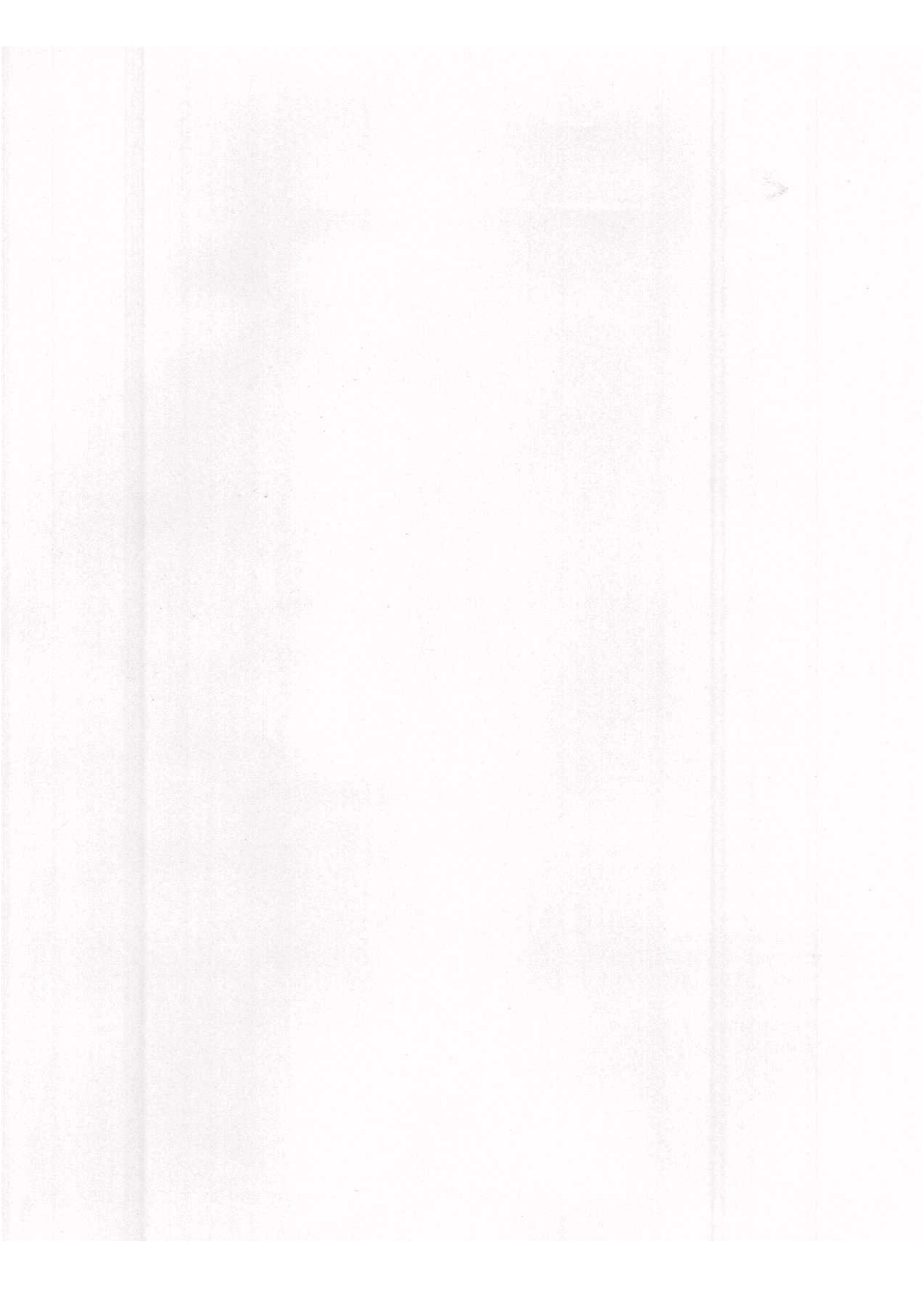
Mural painting From Guma (LUXOR)





ART AND HANDICRAFT

● GLIMPSES OF WOOD TURNERY CRAFT ● POPULAR GLASS ● POPULAR JEWELLERY ● "Almoulid" Doll ● POPULAR COSTUMES ● TATTOO IN FOLK ART ● ORNAMENTAL UNITS IN OLD NUBIA



Face of Egypt

by Hassan Osman

Folk arts represent a lifestyle in Egypt. These arts include material as well as abstract legacy which is capable of assimilating development.

Farmers, workers and hunters have inherited these arts which represent the historical and social memory that reflects the originality of this people whose artist has been able to create the balance required for coping with other cultures.

Not only does this section aim at introducing folk art as an autonomous or spontaneous art, but it also aims at reviewing some patterns of folk life which include household furniture as well as some folk crafts such as pottery and Al-Moulid's doll. This part also introduces a field study of the art of jewellery, clothing, turnery and glasswork.

A survey of these field studies emphasizes the fact that Egyptian art and product is not haphazard or meaningless, and that colours and ornaments were not used as mere decorations but

as a philosophy dealing with life and beliefs. Egyptian folk arts are characterized by originality and spontaneity despite the mechanical spirit of modern life with its machinery and people's aspirations to simulate western lifestyle regarding furniture and clothing.

These arts originated thousands of years ago. The Egyptian farmer has his own philosophy of life and is still connected with songs, tales and legends which can be traced in the beliefs of Ancient Egyptian life. The shephered who goes about the desert in search of a drop of water or some grass still finds joy in seeing the bright colours of clothes, ornaments and jewellery worn by women. The bedouin woman still spends hours and days in order to produce one piece of floor mat made of wool dyed in natural pigments. She also spends a long time making her wedding veil and embroidering it with pieces of metal and brightly - coloured threads.

Despite the changes occurring in our Egyptian society which reflect only a part of the changes in our modern world, and though the folkloric artist has become preoccupied with life affairs in search of new economic resources, the Egyptian people's mind is basically artistic, i.e. modern furniture modelled on the French styles, and clothes, as well as other crafts which have been introduced into our modern life, still retain an Egyptian flavour which distinguishes them from other styles.

Throughout these field studies Egypt's original face stands out and reveals the beginnings of the ancient Egyptian artist until the end of the Islamic art. When Egypt was preoccupied with matters that were imposed on her during some historical eras, the folk artist was also preoccupied with registering the features and beliefs of his country on the house fronts, folk portraits, Al-Moulid's doll, tatoo, pottery inscription, plaster windows, and Arabic turnery.

Folk arts have a crucial role in moulding the contemporary Egyptian artistic movement. This is due to the fact that folk arts are the source which provides contemporary artists with situations, forms and elements that enable them to create portraits or statues reflecting various aspects of life. The colours, joy and philosophy of life play a role in creating an autonomous Egyptian art.

A survey of field studies on some folk crafts and arts may shed light on the painstaking efforts done by scholars to obtain and record data with a view to preserving this legacy and introducing it to public readers. This will help to enhance its artistic value in order to reach a satisfactory level in the history of art. In this connection, the photograph plays a great role in recording a certain moment, the light and the general atmosphere and environment which have preserved the feelings and heart pulsation of this nation.

The researcher Samia Kotby has recorded her remarks on the art of jewellery and the impact of magic on the forms and shapes of jewellery, as well as protective symbols and some other prevalent beliefs regarding people's tendency for having ornaments made of precious stones. For example, ruby pleases hearts, emerald protects virtue, coral provides life, sapphire hastens cure, and turqouise prevents disasters and strengthens hearts. In addition, envy can be avoided by wearing amulets shaped as an eye or a blue bead. The researcher also refers to symbols in Christianity which have become part and parcel of shaping jewellery of gold and silver such as crosses, pets like fish , and pigeons and plants such as vine leaves and grape bunches.

The researcher Widad Hamid states in her research on folk fashions that fashion is a universal language that indicates the country of the individual, the social class and the economic status. Apart from their normal function, clothes reflect people's traditions, customs and beliefs.

In her research on pottery, Aida Khattab refers to the rituals of this craft which dates back to the beginning of life up till now. This craft was used to serve some magical and utilitarian purposes. It was later used for other purposes. She points out how pottery developed with time and fulfilled people's needs in this life and hereafter.

In a research on Al-Moulid's doll Zeinab Higazy provides another aspect of Egyptian celebrations of religious feasts. The researcher has selected the Moulid's doll with its bright colours and traditional symbols. This doll was used in ancient history for religious purposes and it was made from ivory, pottery or clay, but nowadays it is made of congealed sugar.

Malak Morsi refers in her research on glasswork to the early glass ovens that were discovered in the city of Thebes which date back to the reign of king Amenhotep II of the twelfth dynasty . The researcher demonstrates that Alexandria was one of the most famous cities in glasswork industry during the Greek era and throughout the Roman age. She relates how Emperor Nero was so startled by two glass cups made in Thebes that he bought them for 50 pounds in gold.

In the field of folk furniture Zeinab Higazy sums up her experiences and travels from north to south . She introduces the idea and philosophy of furniture in the different sectors and cultures of Egyptian people. The modern styles of furniture have been influenced by folk furniture that provides comfort.

In her research on turnery, Esmat Awad adds more information that explains the details of this craft which supplements the art of interior architecture of the simple as well as the sophisticated Egyptian house .

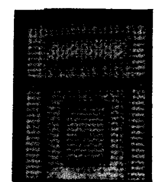
In a research on tatoo, Sawsan Amer provides photographic documents expressing symbols, legends and heroic events of folk tales derived from the myth of Isis and Osiris.

Gawdat Abdel-Hamid provides a field study on the ornamental units in the Nubian houses in three villages. He showed how the area of Al-Kinuz and Al-Arab has influenced the shaping of ornamental units in the south of Egypt.

Thus, the Egyptian cameraman has recorded whatever he could of the phenomena of popular life .

GLIMPSES OF WOOD TURNERY CRAFT

BY Esmat Ahmed Awad



Wood turnery is a well known craft that was practised by the ancient Egyptian, this craft reached a very high degree of perfection and sound taste during old times. Egypt had a deeply rooted fame in the art of turnery, Ancient Egyptian remnants contain large quantities of turned wood and the tools used in this craft are found in temple wall inscriptions explaining their use. These tools included hammers, axes, chisels and saws, all of which had wooden handles.

Surprisingly, all rings found on the wooden stands of seats are hand-made and resemble those turned by lathe. One of the seats found in the tomb of Tut Ankh Amon has stands ornamented with rings similar to modern turned ones, but it has not been demonstrated whether these were turned or filed.

The Copts inherited from their forefathers skills and crafts, especially the art of carpentry in which they show remarkable supremacy as well as experience in various types of wood .They did not only use local types of wood, but they imported the best types such as ebony from Somalia, Ethiupia and South Sudan, and walnut, nut and oak from Europe and West Asia .

In the thirteenth century some Coptic houses which were full of handmade turned woodwork were found. These included

wooden doors, and mashrabiyaat (projecting oriental window with wooden latticework enclosure) Those mashrabiyaat were made from pine or Turkish walnut and beech wood. They have been used since the Roman age until the present time. Many Coptic pieces of wood turnery were found in the nunneries of the city of Habo, Koum Ishkaw, Asiut and Sakkara . The Coptic museum keeps a collection of Coptic woodwork that show the various phases of carpentry and its ornamentation since the Christian age where the Byzantine-Greek influence is obvious .

The Coptic tradition was prevailing in carpentry and other related crafts such as inscription, turnery and inlay work. This tradition lasted until after the Islamic conquest of Egypt and until the Islamic tradition prevailed during the third century of Hijrah, Islamic arts and ornamentation reached the stage of maturity during the reign of Ibn Toloon . During the Fatimid era Islamic art was flourishing and exhibited various artistic elements such as geometric and floral ornamentations all of which were abstract drawings unrelated to the imitation of nature.

Wood turnery craft still has some traces in the districts of old Cairo. For instance, during the 17th and 18th centuries a number of exquisite houses were established in the following districts:-

In Gamalia District lies the house of Sheikh Mohamed Amin Al-Siheimy at Al-Darb El-asfar. This house dates back to 1648 A.D.

In Al-Darb El-Ahmer District lies the house of Gamal El-Din Alzahaby at the Housh Quadam Alley. This house dates back to 1637A.D. In the same district lies also the house of Zainab Khaton at Al-Azhary Alley . In Sayeda Zainab District lies the house of Ibrahim Katkhuda El-Sinnary at the Mong Alley.

In Hussain District also lies Wakalat Al-Ghoury which contains a number of stores established by Konsowa Al-Ghoury.

There are also remains of old houses such as the house of Alkreetlia Lady adjacent to Ibn Toloon Mosque. This house was established by Mahmoud Selim Al-Gazzar in 1636 A.D. and was converted to a museum containing some Islamic remains.

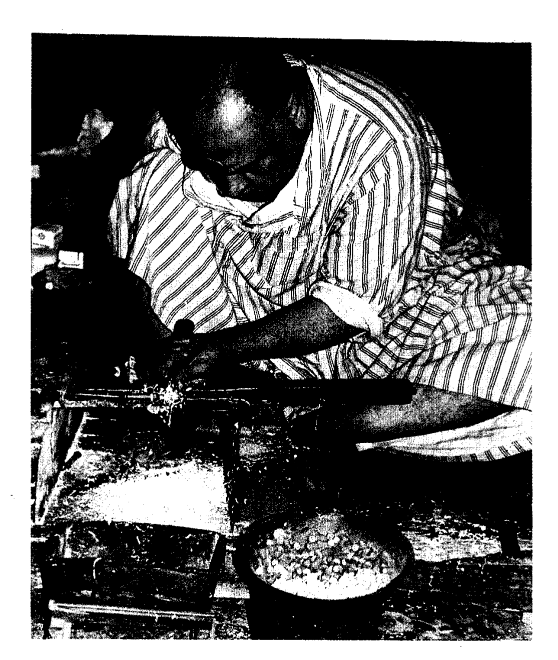
After being restored, these houses have become sightseeing sites for tourists and visitors. There are also some old houses in Rosetta established by the Memelukes .

There are also various woodworks that preceded the turnery craft such as the one known as (Abou Ganzeer). This pattern is made by making an ornamented hollow piece of wood and applying it on a similar one in such a way as to produce a number of ornamental units. The exquisite shape is made by the pattern known as dovetailing or interjunction, for which no glue or nails are required.

These woodworks are used as windows or door parts and the vacated areas allow light and air inside and also allow vision from inside out. Such woodworks are costy and need much effort. Therefore, craftsmen have invented less expensive patterns which require less effort known as (Almangour) whose unit consists of two parts the first of which has part of it vacated, then the other part is applied to it using dovetailing. In addition, these woodworks are designed in such a way as to control the entry of light, alleviate the heat of the weather and protects the privacy of the household.

The mashrabiya means the external outlet of the old house which overlooks the road. The base part of mashrabiya was used for holding the water jars to get cool. Those mashrabiyas were made of turned wood pieces known as the mashrabiya pieces. This mashrabiya is so called after the verb "yashrab" meaning to drink out of the water jars. It was originally designed to conceal women from neighbors and passers-by and to enable women to watch the road unseen.

The religious and climatic factors led to the invention of mashrabiya in the Islamic style of



Wood Turnery in the traditional style

architecture. Artists invented exquisite masterpieces out of wood turnery with geometrical figures.

Turned wood was also used in other woodworks such as doors, windows, pulpits draught screens, wardrobes, moldings and other things.

The industrial level in Egypt declined during the Ottoman era when Sultan Selim left Egypt taking with him a large number of the highly skilled craftsmen including wood turners which weakened this craft. However turnery still exists in Egypt despite the decrease in the number of workers in this craft. The Turners Alley is a living witness on this craft in the past.

The term "turner" refers to one who perfects the art of turnery .

Types of wood: -

Egyptian craftsmen have shown significant supremacy and experience in examining different types of wood. Since wood is a commonly used substance, it is important to shed light on some types of wood, how to maintain them and ways of processing them.

1- Wood should be protected by good dehydration which gives it resistance against parasites .

2- Wood is processed by sawing up the tree into logs of various thicknesses, widths and lengths.

Most widely used types of wood should have the following specifications: colour, weight, fabric, measurements and use. Types of wood used in making furniture, engraving and turnery are numerous and depend on their distinctive qualities.

Local Wood :-

Sant wood is tough, rigid and has a reddish colour which changes by time. It is similar to ebony and used in making furniture.

Mulberry wood has a yellowish colour and contains red circles It is tough and has condensed fibres. It can be used in making furniture and turnery as its surface can be polished.

Tamarind wood has a white yellowish colour and is used in making furniture.

Nut wood is a good type of wood that can be used in making furniture.

Nabk wood is a good type of wood and may replace beech in making furniture.

Guava, lemon, sycamore, olive, date, willow wood are used in turnery as they have different ornamental colour.

Imported Timber:

Imported timber includes mild workable and tough rigid types.

a- Workable wood includes red pine and yellow pine known as (Mosky or Swedish). These are used in carpentry, turnery and furniture.

b- Tough Rigid timber includes beech and ebony. Beech timber is basically white yellowish in colour, but turns to reddish yellow after dehydration. It is flexible and is preferred in making seats and heavy furniture. Ebony has various types with different colours:-

Red, brown, green and black. It is tough and used in turnery.

Types of wood turnery

1- Large turnery

This type of turnery includes turnery of seat and table legs and furniture. An old example of this type of turnery is the wooden fence around the Mardany Mosque in Tibbana. There is also another type called cistern turnery that is used in windows overlooking internal corridors in order to allow air and light inside the place.

2- Fine Turnery (Known as Mashrabiya Turnery)

Mashrabiya turnery has different names and measures. Turned heads may have various geometrical shapes. Maymouny type of turnery refers to oval or hexagonal units.

There are also turned units used for ornamentation and joining other units. It should be noted that both large and fine turnery may exist side by side in one unit. Thus, we can find a large frame containing fine turnery representing Arabic orthography a pending lamp, an animal or a bird. Two different colours of two different types of timber can be used to give an exquisite woodwork.

Turnery craft and carpentry in general were among the crafts that used to have a chief master, as every craft had a master. Every craftsman or woodworker who wanted to join the turnery craft, for example, has to submit a woodwork of his own creation to be examined as regards geometric and artistic shape.

Woodworks and turned shapes used in ancient houses have added innovations in external and internal designs. Such exquisite and beautiful designs have contributed a lot to Egypt's civilization role in the field of folk crafts.

Among the houses which were designed and modelled after the Memeluke design during the Ottoman reign (1517-1805 A.D.) are the old Memeluke houses in Rossetta .

Mashrabiya in Rossetta houses project from the side wall and it is decorated with some ornaments. The front of the Mashrabiya is divided into many turned woodwork units. The craftsman has also added some ornamental designs which exhibit an Islamic character, such as Islamic arches.

Turned woodwork used in Rossetta houses include both wide (spacious) and fine turnery. Wood used to be turned manually (by lathes operated manually) , but nowadays manual lathes have been replaced by electrical ones to cope with the spirit of modern age and mass production.

Wood turners have creatively made efforts to introduce various turned units into walking sticks made from ebony; kuhl containers made of wood ivory or animal bone or even plastic; lampshade pedestals, wood draught screens; mirror and photograph frames; jewellery boxes; rosary beads; and ornamentation of musical instruments.

Creative turnery is an outcome of long and painstaking effort in training craftsmen as well as of awareness and development of creative abilities in some schools for teaching traditional crafts. The Ministry of culture has recently established a crafts center in Al-Ghoury District which started in 1960 and still plays an essential role in developing the turnery craft and teaching the young generation to be future craftsmen.

Mashrabiya from the house of Al-Siheimy at Gamalia District



Popular Glass

BY Malak El - Sayed Morsi



It is certain that the ancient Egyptians were the first to invent the making of glass since the days of the fifth dynasty. This can be proved by beads, eyes of statues, glassware and ovens used in the making of glass found in Thebes dating back to the reign of king Amenhotep II in the twelfth dynasty

Glass ovens from the reign of Akhnaton were discovered at Tal-el-Amarna, others were found to the south of Natroun Valley dating back to the twentieth dynasty. Many historians and archaeologists claim that the invention of glass was in Syria and Iraq or in Lebanon by the Phoenicians but no ovens have been found in these areas so far.

Alexandria was very famous as a centre of making glass during the Greek and Roman eras. Historical references state how Emperor Tiberius fetched glass artisans from Alexandria to set up the first glass factory in Rome. Egypt's production of glassware was so good and so abundant that part of the taxes levied on Egypt to be sent annually to Rome was paid in kind from the manufacture of glass. It was also said that Emperor Nero paid fifty gold pounds for two cups of glass made in Thebes.

The manufacture of glass in Egypt greatly developed during the Roman era as a result of industrial progress. Glass artisans in Egypt invented a pipe for blowing glass in the air, then they used to blow glass in a mould. The

two methods are still used in Egypt in manual glass. For the first time in history, the manufacture of window glass-panes and ceramics came to be known by the ancient Egyptians. Gypsum ornamented with glass was used in prettily formed geometrical shapes. However, Egypt's greatest achievement in the manufacture of glass since the Roman and Byzantian eras and the beginnings of the Islamic era is that kind of glass known as 'milleflori' owing to its variable intermingled colours in spontaneous, exquisite formations. The same methods used in the manufacture of glass and other industcries remained unchanged for nearly two centuries.

During the Abbassid era, especially after the city of Samara'a came into existence at the beginnings of the third century A.H., all trades and arts started to be characterized by an evident Islamic touch. Human and animal drawings had disappeared, plant drawings were modified and Arabic writings appeared as a clear decorative element.

The artistic, decorative styles were - to a great extent - common to the Islamic countries of the Middle East (Egypt, Syria and Iraq) which made it often difficult to identify where the glass work of art was made unless there was evidence on the article itself. Alexandria, Fayoum, Aleppo, Sidon and Tyre were among the most important centres of the making of glass in the first four centuries of Islam. The products of that period were famous for their white greenish colour with its various shades.

Instances of glass pots found at the beginnings of the Islamic era are jugs which have round or pear or oval shapes with a long, conic neck which ends with a big mouth part of which is pressed together to be used as a tap for pouring liquids. Jugs or containers usually had a handle for easy carrying .

In addition, there were small round or flat vials used for perfumes and kohl. Moslems were fond of using glass pots for their great interest in perfumes in compliance with the Sunna of their revered Prophet who especially cared for the use of perfume and with their theologians' advice, in addition to their interest in chemical science. This led to a great need for glass beakers used in experiments and conveying liquids beside their great love of glass pots for their beauty and purity.

Method of Manufacture:

The industrial and decorative methods of blowing in air or in mould continued since the beginnings of the Islamic age with a view to making polygons and details of geometric, plant and script drawings which replaced human and animal drawings that were common in the Roman era.

Decoration may be made by pressing on the wall of the pot with a special tool that looks like tongs and this results in ornaments which are deep on one side and protruding on the other. Decoration may also be by scratching or digging or cutting by a wheel. Embellishment may also be achieved by adding streaks of glass which are fixed when soft to the pot, then they are pressed till they become level with the surface and form something like marble colourful curves. The glass streaks may only be stuck and not pressed to the surface. This was the favourite method during the Islamic conquest of Egypt and remained popular with artisans long after.

Decoration by stamping continued often containing Arabic writings involving name of owner or maker or vessel or supplication.

The oldest Islamic glass we have got so far includes weight measures stamps, and grain measures belonging to the Vali of Egypt (Korra Ben Shereek) dating back to the year 90 A.H. On these objects names of Valis and amount of weight were inscribed. These measures differed in form and size. They could be light plates with which gold, silver and precious stones are weighed; they might be heavy cubes used for heavy weights. There were also bits of glass jewellery, amusement articles and children's toys.

In the Abbassid era, glass developed industrially and artistically for the great interest the Caliphs took in possessing it .

Lustered Glass:

During the Toulonic era, Egyptian glass was affected by Iraqi glass to some extent so that its forms came to be like what is called 'post-Sasanic' metallic forms containing Kufi writing and names of emirs.



Blowing into the pipes

In the Abbassid era, glass artisans embellished their glass vessels by metallic lustre painting which is a mixture of sulpher, argentum or copper oxide, and ferrum reductum. These are melted in vinegar or any other acid forming a liquid used for painting. Then the vessel is put in a warm, breezy, heavily smoking oven ... When the vessel is taken out of the oven, glittering decorations are seen on it, metallic lustre on the surface of the glass vessels becomes kaleidoscopic. Some paintings are in one colour, others in many.

Glass artisans made use of the transparency of the glass vessels. They painted some artistic drawings on the inner surface using different colours so that the article glittered with beautiful colours which became changeable when looked at through the light - a proof of artistic excellence. Egyptian artisans made other kinds of delicate, transparent glass tinted with pretty colours such as olive green, blue violet and chestnut with their various degrees. It is noticeable that the colour of handle, mouth or base is different from that of the vessel itself. Products of this type date back to the first and second centuries Hegira viz. the seventh and eighth. A.D. Fustat excavations uncovered beautiful models of this type.

In their excavations in Fustat in 1965, the American Research Centre mission found the oldest vessel lustered and dated. It is now kept at Cairo Islamic Art Museum with these words

inscribed 'In the Name of God, the Merciful and Gracious. Abdul Samad Ben Ali; May God restore him'. Abdul Samad was the Vali of Egypt in 155 H. 772 A.D.

Another article which is the base of a vessel is preserved at Cairo Islamic Art Museum with kufi inscription (made in Egypt according to elephant type in 163 H./779 A.D.) Glass industry- especially lustered decoration glass- greatly flourished during the Fatimid era.

During the Fatimid era, the shapes and forms of glass vessels greatly varied, e.g. chess pieces, pen cases, vases, and censers. Many articles were devised such as toys, bird and animal glass statues with some details added such as feet, wings and bases to carry them. The emerging of the personality of the glass artisan who wrote his name on his products is a proof of the progress and flourishing of the glass industry during the Fatimid era.

Fustat, Fayoum and Alexandria were the most important glass centres in the middle ages.

Rock Crystals:

The Fatimed era was famous for the manufacture of art objects made of rock crystals which came to be linked with the making of glass though it is a natural and not a man - made material used in sculpture and engraving without being part of the galss industry. During the Fatimid era, glass artisans made a kind of thick glass in imitation of rocky crystals and embellished it by cutting. Thirteen cups of thick glass in the shape of a bucket known as St. Aldwich cups are still existing.

Glass in the Ayubite Era:

The same Fatimid methods were adopted by the Ayubites in whose era the industry of glass flourished in Egypt and Syria.

During that era, it became common to ornament glass vessels with mica coated with gold. One of the most important qualities of raw glass decorated with mica was its greenish or yellowish or violetish colour.

The shapes of the glass vessels were famous for their gracefulness and fluidity which characterised all the products of the Ayubite era not only concerning shape but of animal and plant decorations as well. Ayubite glass was also famous for decorative writing consisting of invocatory phrases written in Neskh transcript which was replacing Kufi transcript. The lily and the eagle were among the paintings that appeared on Ayubite glass.

Glass in the Memeluki Era:

Among the most important glass vessels coated with mica that started to appear during the Ayubite era and spread througout the Memeluki era were pending lamps and glass covers of lamps decorated with gold and multicolured mica.

The largest group of pending lamps is in the Islamic Art Museum in Cairo. Their number amounts to eighty lamps decorated with mica and coated with gold, beside the pending lamps without decorations but partly bear historical or invocatory phrases in addition to Koranic verses; for instance, the quotation from Nur Sura (God is the light of heavens and earth. His is the light of a pending lamp and the lamp is enclosed in glass...) to the end of the holy verse. It is worthy of notice that these art objects took their name from the word 'mishkah' or pending lamp in the holy verse. Glass artisans did their best to decorate these pending lamps motivated by their religious enthusiasm.

In the shrine of Imam Al-Hussein, there are twenty-two pending lamps decorated and gilded in the name of El-Zaher Abi Said Barkuk from the fifteenth century A.D. in addition to the private collections in Egypt and abroad in the museums of the world.

Most pending lamps consist of three main parts: the neck which is conic with a wide mouth narrowing a little as it sticks to the body which is either circular or oval bulging at the middle and drawn upwards and downwards. The third part is the base which is conic in the shape of a funnel turned upside down. Each pending lamp had three or four handles or 'ears' from which metal chains were hung to meet at a genuine ostrich egg or a glass oval

bell which looked like an ostrich egg from the top of which emerged a chain fixed to the roof. Most of these pending lamps date back to the eighth century Hegira (14th A.D.) some of which bear historical or invocatory phrases written in the Memeluki calligraphic style or verses from the Koran. They were used in lighting mosques at that time. Some pending lamps were decorated with plants such as the lotus or poppy or margerite flowers. In this the artisans were influenced by Chinese art, for they liberated themselves from the stiffness of Samara' innovations coming very near to nature.

The role of human and animal decorations in pending lamp embellishment was not important though bird drawings were influenced by Chinese Mongul art. Fabulous animals and birds were often used but they were greatly similar to contemporary photography schools. During the Memeluki era, pending lamps were decorated with animal symbols of power and courage such as the eagle and jaguar, with inscriptions belonging to the Sultans, or with symbols such as the calyx, bundle, weapon, pen-case, polo stick, etc. Artistic vessels were also decorated with writings which could be divided into two parts: religious writing that includes invocatory phrases or verses from the Koran and historical writing which involves the name of the Sultan, his titles and qualities. Inscription embellishment was in Memeluki 'tulut' or kufi writing against a beautiful, leafy background.

Plastered Glass in the Coptic Civilisation:

Throughout the stages of Coptic art, we find several distinct artistic products one of which is the art of glass mixed with plaster resulting in objects with artistic and geometric tinge which has a symbolic touch far from representing living human beings. Leaves and fruits appeared such as the leaves and bunches of grapes in beautiful branches. Besides, some plastered objects appeared, most important of which was the pigeon as a symbolic unit, and the peacock in limited movements which conform with the method of implementation.

Some of the exquisite masterpieces at the Islamic Art Museum .



Plastered Glass in the Islamic Civilisation:

The Moslem artist used plastered glass in the windows of mosques through which light penetrates into the mosque reflecting colours thus giving the inside of the mosque an atmosphere of woe, quietude and veneration. These designs were confined to plant drawings in which the Moslem artist used his skill to create, in addition to flowers and abstract geometrical units, birds and animals. His interest in this type of art emanated from his deep religious sense together with a complete control of aesthetic principles which are subject to spiritual artistic factors and the realisation of laws of balance, opposition, analogy and plunging into the essence of things looking for new forms to be skilfully implemented with a view to diffusing pleasure and enjoyment.

Interjoined glass was found in the Fatimid era and spread during the Memeluki and Ottoman eras. It can be seen in Mohammed Ali Mosque and Sultan Hassan Mosque.

It also appeared in the Turkish era as Turkish baths had their walls made of coloured interjoined glass, thus giving a feeling of comfort and bliss.

Glass was also used in making Ramadan lanterns which children held happily. These lanterns are linked with the blessed month of Ramadan.

Ramadan Lantern:

Ramadan lantern came into existence in the Fatimid era when Egyptians received their ruler (Al Montassir Bellah) with joy, greeting and welcoming him. Darkness of night changed into bright daylight. This took place in the month of Ramadan. Afterwards, it became a custom of the Egyptians. The lantern consists of glass and tin. It is a popular, primitive handiwork and the maker gets the glass from the remains of factories and of broken glasspanes and the tin from the remains of tin factories.

Tools used are: a diamond for cutting glass, scissors for clipping tin and a presser for soldering with tin. There are several stages of making the lantern:

1. Choice of required size and shape.
2. Deciding measure of sides and making a model for each measure. This is a thin sheet iron which has the same shape as the piece of glass which is cut on the iron sheet.
3. For each measure, an amount of glass is cut and painted with different colours.
4. Then the sheets of tin are cut into pieces according to the lengths of the sides.
5. These strips are bent to take the required shape according to the design of the lantern.
6. The strips are then soldered to form the two parts of the lantern: the top (dome) and the bottom (base). The soldering is made by using tin and calophony.

The bits of coloured glass are afterwards set in their places and fixed by bending the edges of thin sheet iron on them after preparing a place inside the lantern for the candle and making a hinge for the door.

Now the lantern is complete. However, the making of the lantern has witnessed some developments. It started to be made of dark, fumed glass sprinkled with paint thus making the lantern look different from what it was.

The lantern has many names some of which are old such as 'abu dallaya', pistol, Al-Farouk, crown, tar-el-alma, tram (having the shape of a tram), fanous and sons which is a lantern round which there are 4 or 5 little lanterns attached to it, Abdel Aziz which is still common and great amounts of it are still made, the clock and the rectangle, etc. Three years ago, a type of lantern called' water-melon piece' with slanting sides and made in great numbers appeared. It is hung now at the entrances of big hotels, touristic areas, some mosques, streets and at the entrances of lanes.

The artisan makes approximately 100 lanterns daily of the small size. As for the big sizes, they take longer time.

On some lanterns, Koran verses are written as well as phrases such as 'There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah'.

The lantern maker works in this trade all the year round until the month of Sha'ban when he starts to demonstrate them and sell them to small traders who sell them everywhere. The merchants of the different governorates go to Cairo annually to buy great amounts of lanterns especially from Berket-El-Fil (Saida Zeinab) and Taht - el- Rab' where this industry originates. Young children are elated by this popular lantern with the candle. They hurry to buy and carry it during the nights of the month of Ramadan and walk behind the night crier who awakens people to have their meals

before daybreak. Another lantern made of plastic and lighted by batteries appeared on the market but it soon disappeared before the ordinary popular lantern that is closely linked with the nights of the holy month of Ramadan.

From glass, the small colourful marbles, with which children play are made; and beads are also made of glass. Beads have different colours and forms. Women farmers use beads to decorate their dresses, head covers, and head-kerchiefs in beautiful harmony. Beads are also used by women for their evening and wedding dresses especially with the golden and silver colours which glitter and reflect light ensuing in an atmosphere of joy and elation.

In Cairo, there still exist a few glass blowing factories for the shaping of glass using outdated methods. Their products are simple and reflect traces of Cairene glass art of the Islamic era.

The researcher made a field study of this trade at a factory in Gamalia district by interviewing Haj Hassanein El-Tahan who belongs to one of the oldest families who have been working in this traditional trade and who inherited it generation after generation.

The factory is an old one with a big oven in the centre in that popular district.

Method of Building the Oven and Materials Used:

The oven is primitively made by the glassmaker himself and it is made of ceramic bricks, ordinary bricks, clay from Aswan, fine sand clay. Many openings of different sizes - some are wide and others narrow- are made on the front part and on the sides. The wide openings are used for inserting broken white glass where it is melted. Through the narrow openings, different dyes used for colouring the products are put. The glassmaker has now developed this primitive oven which he inherited from his ancestors so that it works now by means of an electric motor.

Tools used in the industry:

@ A pipe 100 cm long closed at both ends.

@ Iron pipe open at both ends with a diameter .3 cm.

@ A square piece of iron put on the thighs of the maker as he sits before the oven.

@ Tongs for decorating vessels.

Substances and Ores used in the industry:

The main substances are:

@ Broken white glass that can be bought from special traders.

@ Different metal oxides which are melted in a special place in the oven (called 'Tagen') to produce coloured dyes.

@ Manganese oxides to prepare purple colour with its various shades.

@ Cobalt oxides for preparing the dark blue colour with its different shades.

@ Copper droppings called 'Tobana' to prepare the blue colour with its different shades.

@ Iron and copper oxides to prepare the green colour with its different shades.

@ Cobalt and iron for preparing the bronze colour.

@ Table salt which is added with certain amounts and proportions in all cases.

Mothod of preparing the blue dye:

After melting copper droppings which are raw copper it is thrown into special water basins and left for some time, thus forming a very thin layer called 'tobana' which is similar to a garlic-seed cover in its tenderness. Then these covers are taken and gathered in tins

which are bought by glassmakers from copper dealers according to weight. The glassmaker sifts these covers until he makes sure that they have become pure, then he adds to them a certain quantity of salt (five small bags of ordinary table salt to each three kilogrammes of tobana). Mixing them well results in a

substance called (kumbat) which has a ball shape as salt gives it heat and prevents it from disintegrating. Then this substance is put at the top of the oven until it dries. On the next day, it is placed in a special part of the oven called (dyeing spot) where it is exposed to temperature from 20 to 25 centigrade. This takes the whole day till the next day when copper residue is separated and the rest is taken, powdered well and sifted, then put in a tin ready for blue dyeing.

It has been noticed that most of the articles shown were blue as this colour is very popular.

Mothod of preparing the wine colour-dye:

Oxides of manganese from Sinai are prepared, then they are ground well and sifted and scattered with certain proportions on the broken white glass in the oven whose temperature is very high.

This mixture needs continuous overturning through the day till it solidifies and becomes paste ready for use in dyeing with a wine colour. The white colour is added according to the required shade: jujube, mauve, light purple, dark purple, etc.

Method of Preparing the green colour dye:

A piece of iron is put in a crucible in the oven

for a period of three or four days till it melts. Then the cover of the oven is lifted carefully. The glassmaker will find crystallized layers of iron one on top of the other. He takes these layers and powders them, then he sifts them well. The dye is now ready. White broken glass is added and stirred, giving the green colour according to the required shade. White colour is added to this dye resulting in a beechen green colour.

Method of manufacturing glass vessels:

The maker takes a piece of molten paste

after he has put the dye on it as required using the open-ended pipe after heating it. Then he blows into the pipe sensitively according to the required shape. If he wants a vessel with a long neck, the maker shakes it strongly but skilfully and indents it if he wants a base or heel for it.Then he cuts it with tongs and puts a small bit of paste on the edge of the second pipe after it has been heated in the oven. Then he dips it in special mud or handful of dust to make a barrier between the pipe and the glass which is still paste. After this he makes a handle to the vessel or a snake round it, or a mouth for a jug and he shapes it with the tongs in his hand assisted by the iron square on his right thigh as the temperature of the barrel is very high. The maker puts the vessel after it has been shaped in the opening of the oven and at the right temperature. This is done very carefully until the production of the whole day is gathered in that opening. The fire of the oven is put out and the oven is left until it cools down completely. The vessels are taken out carefully so that they may not break.

The making of one piece may take from five to ten minutes according to its size, shape and the maker's mood. The small pieces, however, need more skill and care. The artisan makes pending lamps for illumination in mosques, vases for décor and vessels for beverages. There are also small oval vessels called (rasda) for the prevention of envy. They are hung to walls by a glass ring. They have been known since the days of the pharaohs. They are still used after adding some beads to them. Most buyers of these articles are from the Sudan.

The appearance of a new ore:

New ores started to be used in this industry in the forming of the paste such as jars, empty cream and perfume vessels (especially of French make). After melting them with different dyes, the new product emerges and it looks like glass though it is opaque. It is called (opaline) china and its colour is white or light blue. Opaline is used in making jewellery such as

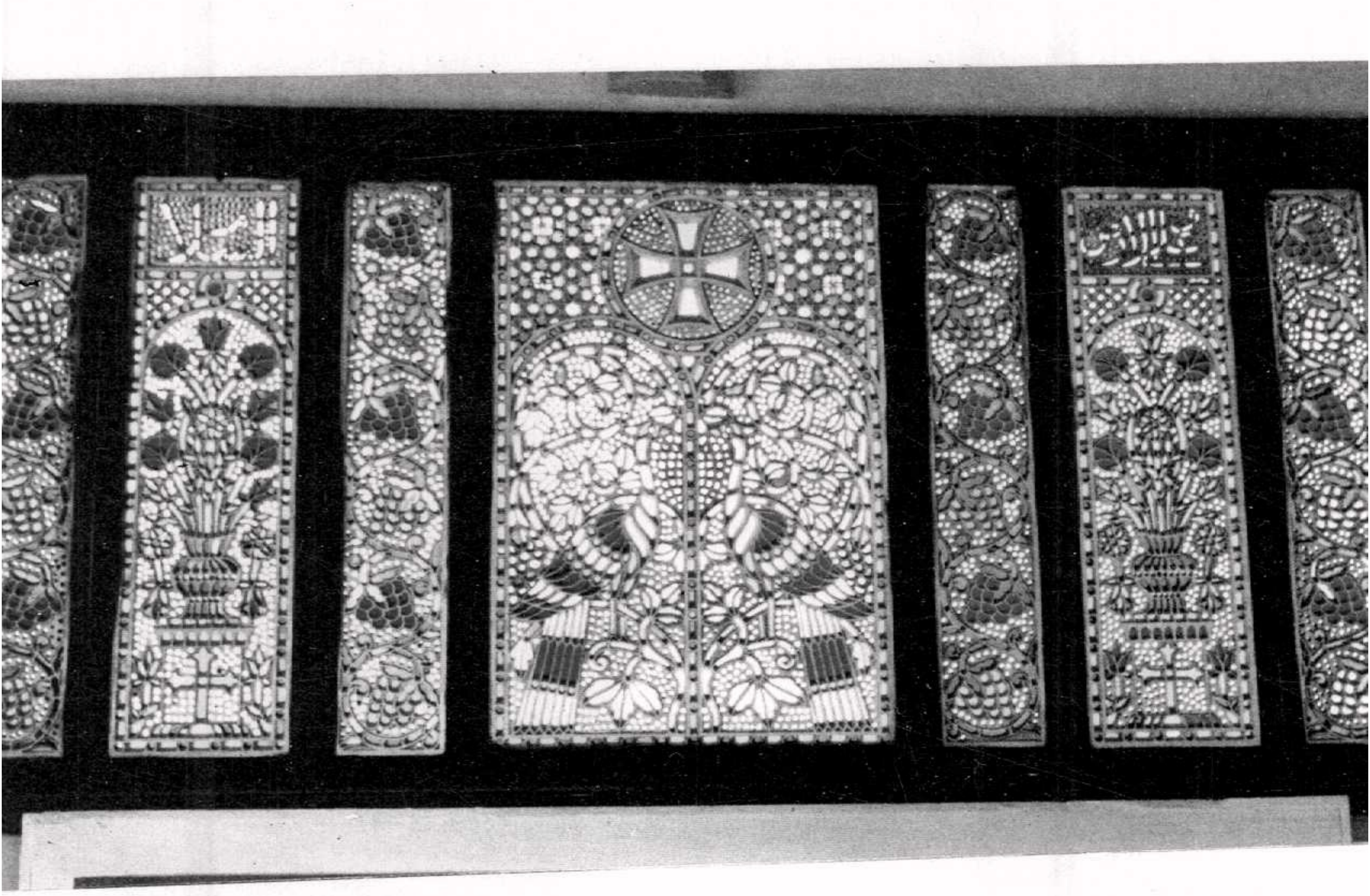


The Melting of glass in the ovens .

necklaces, earrings, buttons and ash-trays. It is said that Soliman - may he be blessed - constructed the castle of Balkis - queen of Sheba- of this glass.

Products of this glass and their use:

Some of these products are used as food and drinking vessels as well as ornaments. Others are used for illumination at mosques and in houses such as pending lamps. Some are used for preventing envy or they may be hung on the chest for beauty. It is shaped like a flat piece with verses from the Koran inscribed to keep the person safe.



Plastered Glass
(From the Coptic Museum)



Part of the exhibits at one of the confectionery and Almoulid Doll shops.

“Almoulid” Doll

BY Dr. Zeinab Higazy



"Almoulid" Doll (Arousit almoulid) is a distinctive feature of Prophet Mohamed's Birthday ceremonies in Egypt. This is considered one of the greatest religious occasions both popularly and nationally.

Now a word on its historical roots is due. Many are the doll types that were handed down to us from previous historical epochs in Egypt. So, possibly "almoulid" doll could be modelled on them. However, it is made of a completely different stuff. The ancestor dolls were made of ivory, bone, pottery, or mud. But "almoulid" doll is made of congealed sugar. But still, all these dolls - old and new-have almost the same purpose: to entertain children.

Almoulid doll is made by cooking sugar into water and then pouring the congested sugar into moulds. Significantly, similar moulds were used by the Ancient Egyptians for shaping their amulets. The doll's mould consists of two parts similar to their coffin and its cover. Also it resembles their Pharaonic statues.

The Egyptian Copts inherited a lot of their Pharaonic ancestors' customs. Hence, a number of Coptic ivory or bone dolls were excavated in "Abo Mena", a region near Lake Maryot.

When the Fatimids took over Egypt, they sought to revive such festivities and celebrations to win over the Egyptians' hearts. The celebration of the Birthday of the Prophet was

extermely wonderful in the Fatimid period, when rulers were most generous to their subjects. Lots of superb foods and sweets were served to the people then. There was a special market for confectionery statues; it was called the confectioners' market. They used to hang their products on the walls of their shops.

The most famous of these factories was that of "Dar Elfitra" built by El-Aziz Billah, where about a hundred confectioners worked. According to Elkalkashandi, theirs were the best products, as they were made of the finest sugar and formed into the finest shapes: human, animal, bird, tree and fruit. And for Ibn Gibir they were placed on dolls-like raised platforms. Also Elkalkashandi stated that these products were served on three hundred big copper trays.

On the Prophet's Birthday celebration they were handed out to the highest state officials, preachers, and the common people. From his canopy, the Caliph (the Fatimid ruler) watched certain ceremonies. Dr. Abdel Ghani Elshal said that the colours of the Caliph's uniform and canopy matched or were harmonious. The folk artist captured this harmony and expressed it in his art- his dolls.

Also the Caliph's crown was inlaid with the most precious gem surrounded by lesser gems with a crescent of rubies that recalls to our minds the crescent ornaments on "Almoulid" dolls.

Also, the rulers in the Fatimid period lived in extravagant pompous luxury, as their court treasure houses were filled with superb clothes, private as well as formal, together with books, masterpieces and doll patterns (in the shapes of animals, birds, trees and fruits) made of precious metals and studded with gems and precious stones. Also the Fatimids' palaces contained rarities and precious things which dazzled the onlookers' eyes and minds.

The Fatimid rulers took special interest in artists and encouraged them both morally and materially, which led to originality, innovation and creativity in all arts generally and folkoric art particularly.

It is worth noting here that historians almost unanimously stated that "almoulid" doll was an exclusively Fatimid creation; it did not exist in any other period in Egypt.

At present numerous factories manufacture "almoulid" doll and some other models such as the horse, the camel, the ship and the mosque. These factories are situated in El-Gamalia, Bab El-Bahr and El-Azbakia, in Cairo where the Prophet's Birthday was always celebrated. In his book" **Modern Egyptians**", Edward Lane says, 'The Prophet's Birthday used to be celebrated on the banks of El-Azbakia pond . Then, after it had been drained, the celebration took place in the spacious square that was the pond".

In the above confectionery factories there are full-timers as well as part-time workers. They produce dolls and sweets on demand and for places where the celebrations and festivities are held . But on the Prophet's Birthday they produce lots and lots of dolls and sweets and distribute them all over Egypt, since it is a national occasion. Also folk artists exhibit their products on this day. People buy such products as they are reminders of the religious and socio-political events related to this great occasion- the Prophet's birth . We can see among their exhibits: the mosque, "Almahmal"- which is a camel carrying" Al Kiswa" (the covering) of the "Kaaba" (in Macca in Saudia) to which Egypt used to dedicate annually. Also in times of war, the folk artist used to make doll tanks, guns and rockets.

"Almoulid" dolls always go to the girls whereas the boys take the other types, so that happiness may prevail among all.

Preparations for "Almould" (The Prophet's Birthday celebration) start on the 10th of Muharam. Shops start setting booths and raised platforms, with tents decorated with wonderful coloured, Islamic units, where all types of dolls are exhibited. Also peanuts, sesame, "hummusiya" (a sweet made of roasted chickpeas), "lauziya" (a sweet made of almonds)

and many other types of candies and sweets are also exhibited on nice shelves in clean glass window shops. At night, the dolls are attractively glittering. This celebration lasts till the twelfth of Rabie al-awwal which marks the excellent birthday of our gracious Prophet- peace be upon him.

The manufacturing of "almoulid" doll is a multi-staged process. These phases are as follows:

Manufacturing the wooden moulds:

They are made in small workshops nearby the confectionery factory (where the dolls are produced). These moulds are carved of timber and given different shapes in accordance with the weights specified by the factory owners. Such dolls are sold for the amount of congealed sugar they contain. The skilled engravers pour the congealed sugar liquid into the moulds, each according to the required weight. These moulds consist of two complementary halves, which when put together give the required shape and hold the required weight of congealed sugar.

The skilled and experienced engraver cuts the figures in the mould, and he always leaves the lower part shapeless and empty so as to form the doll's skirt. After pouring the liquid sugar, it is left to cool and become dry or rather solid. Also engraved in the mould are the doll's hands which are always at its waist.

Tying up the moulds :

This is the first phase inside the confectionery factory, where the two-part mould is tied up with flax rope and covered with water.

Moulds are soaked so that water may go through their pores; this has a twofold purpose: first, the congealed sugar does not get stuck, and second, the temperature inside the mould decreases, which speeds up the freezing of the liquid sugar. Moulds are stacked up with their open, empty ends upward.

Congealing the sugar:

A worker puts a certain amount of sugar in a big copper container with two wooden handles. The sugar is added to an equal amount of water. The container is put on the cooker. To the water and sugar is added some salt and lemon juice. The worker keeps stirring until the mixture gets white and thick. Naturally many containers are used in big factories.

A spoon-like piece of wood or a stick with a broad end is used for stirring the mixture. This stick is called a demon's leg. It is believed that the first confectioner in Egypt was called El-sheikh Alhalawani and that he used a demon to help him in his work. Then one day, so the myth says, the demon fell sick and when El-sheikh went to see him, the demon's mother told him that her son had passed away. Then Elsheikh decided to take the demon's leg and use it for stirring the liquid sugar.

Pouring the congealed sugar :

The container with the congealed sugar is taken off the fire and put on a table, where the tied moulds are placed. Into them the congealed surgar is poured and left for ten minutes until it gets solid inside the moulds. Then, the extra liquid sugar is poured back into the container, which is congealed and poured into other moulds again and so on.

Then comes the adorning of the doll. Basically females do this multi-phased process.

First, they make the inside lining of the doll's skirt, which is very often multi-layered. This design is taken from women's outfits in the Fatimid period; they used to wear more than one skirt at a time. This inside lining is made of paper. It is hemmed first and then fixed around the waist of the doll with a string.

Next is the doll's dress, which consists of a skirt, a chest, a back, and sleeves. The skirt is cut with one or more layers of graded lengths in a zigzag shape, with same or different colours, bordered at the waist. In this way the size of the doll's waist is determined. Then, both the chest and back of the dress are also fixed with string around the waist. The sleeves are



A doll from Suhag where the sugar is dyed red .
(The stage of getting the doll out of the mould

then tied to the doll's arms with a wire, which is also used to fix its extra hands which are held in supplication.

As for the make-up, only healthy dyestuff (which is used for dying foods) is used. Also real make-up can be used, especially for home-made dolls. Eyes and eyebrows are penciled in black colour, the cheecks and lips coloured red, the hair is either dyed black or a silver or golden wig is fixed on the head. Finally, the nails are painted red.

Also the doll is further decorated by fans and flowers. For these two items the following materials are needed:

@ Palm dry branches that are cut lengthwise according to the required height of the doll's adornment. These longitudinal pieces are then covered with coloured paper .

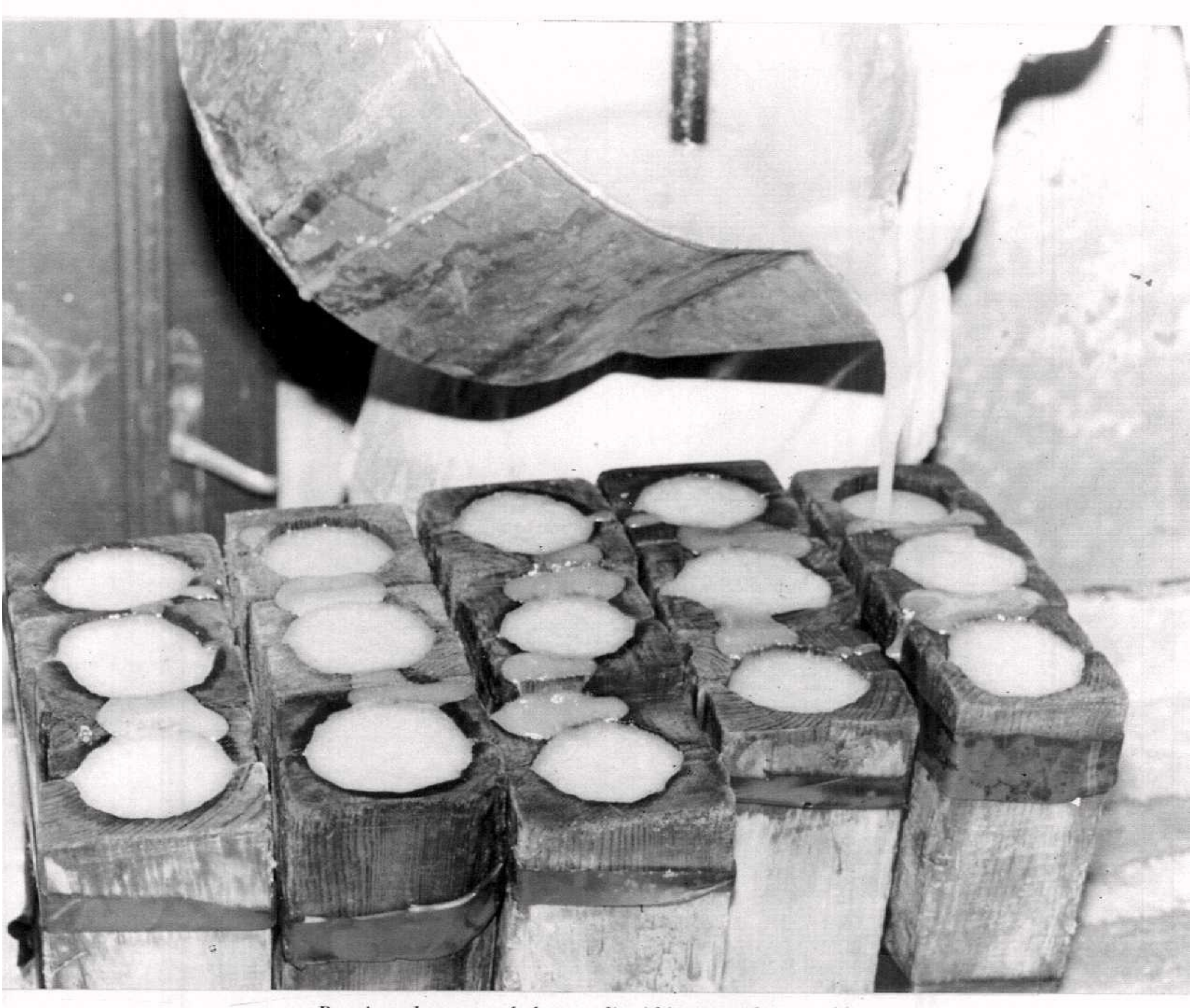
@ Preparing fans that are made of coloured hemmed paper adorned at the outer perimeter with a lustrous paper frame. Also fans are of different sizes.

@ A wire coil is used as a long rope for tying and fixing coloured paper flowers. The number of these flowers differs according to different types of dolls.

Now the palm branch is vertically fixed on the doll's head and tied with wire around the neck and waist. Then one or more branches are horizontally fixed with the vertical one, so that one is in line with the doll's shoulders and another at its waist. This number is increased according to the doll's size. Fans are fixed either at the vertical palm branch if the doll is small, or at the horizontal, if it is a big one. Also in each of its hands a coloured flower is placed. Nowadays, a colour hemmed-paper veil, like a bride's veil, together with a golden or silver crown are placed over its head.

As for the "Nafaqa" doll, it is very big and its size may reach one and a half metres high. It is covered with a lot of flowers, big fans, and hemmed paper. It looks like a real bride in her wedding canopy.

The word "nafaqa" refers to the money the bridegroom spends on his bride while she is still with her parents, before the wedding party. On the Phophet's Birthday, the bridegroom offers this doll together with an amount of sweets to his bride and her family. Her parents put the doll somewhere up in the house so as it can be in a safe place. For when it gets broken, the whole family gets pessimistic, and they immediately buy another one without telling the bridegroom about it. This doll is part of the bride's trousseau, which is carried to the bride's



Pouring the congealed sugar liquid into wooden moulds

new house. According to Dr. Abdel Ghany El-shal, the high place of the doll is meant to ward off the evil eye, and thus protect this new nuptial life.

By adding the necklace and earrings together with the crown the doll is completely decorated. Also decroative units of lustrous crescents, triangles and circles adorn the doll's dress and its ornaments.

The "disco" doll, unlike the above dolls, has a dress made of lustrous stuff . And instead of the fans and flowers, a wig made of hair and gloden or silver strings, similar to the colour of its dress, is fixed on its head.

However, nowadays, flowers and fans together with small electric lamps are provided, which turns the doll into a glittering star.

Also at present, these dolls are developed and by having their clothes and accessories changed, new types are produced. The "ma'zun" (a man who performs civil marriages in Islam) doll's clothes are made of coloured paper. It wears a "jubba" (a long outer garment, open in front, and with wide sleeves)



Almoulid dolls after their adornment and the addition of of coloured paper flowers

and a "quftan", a turban on the head, with a notebook under its arm.

The steward doll is also developed from "a lmoulid" doll. The face is dyed black. Another is the Egyptian rural woman . All these dolls are the creations of the folk artist, who is influenced by the things and people around him/her in the environment.

Such dolls are decorated by sticking coloured paper bands on their bodies. Then some sweets decorations are added in the shapes of curved, circular and intersected lines. Also coloured paper flowers are fixed to the dolls with wire, which is used to tie some coloured paper flags to them. These green flags have a white crescent and stars in their middle. Significantly, this is Egypt's old flag, which still lives in the folk artist's mind and consciousness.

All these dolls are exhibited on tables for sale, and are transported to the different areas all the country over.



POPULAR JEWELLERY

BY Samia Kottby



-- Egypt's ancient civilization is considered the first and greatest in human history. Each Egyptian ornament has its origin and significance in that history. Its residues underscore the continuity of the Egyptian character's features.

Ancient Egyptians knew beautification which developed and got more and more sophisticated as time passed. As Encyclopedia Britannica indicates, the early Egyptians used silver and gold ornaments for beautification purposes; they did this due to their belief in the magic power of metals. Ornaments were the most important part of both males and females' apparels.

Those people also believed in the magic power of precious stones. They used to put the green stone in the deceased's mouth, which they believed could bring them back to life. They also wore amulets and charms believing in their protective power.

The Ancient Pharaonic State(2980-2475 B.C):

Necklaces were made of beads together with amulets for both men and women. In Queen Hutb's tomb(Hutb is King Cheop's mother) silver bracelets were found. They are inlaid with turquois and chrysolite. Also other monuments include finely manufactured gold, garnet and turquoise jewellery, which belong not only to the Royal Family but also to the ordinary people, who replaced gold with metals like copper or gold- covered bronze. People then believed

that gold had a magic power which could immortalize its wearer: for them gold was timeless.

The Middle Pharaonic State(2160-1788 B.C):

Jewellery made of beads and ceramics was in vogue then. Blue and green were the predominant colours. These ornaments were shaped like hawks, shells or beads or parts of the human body, birds, animals and vegetables, which amounted to about two hundred and fifty units. Each of these ornamental units symbolized a specific meaning. For example, the hawk(with a human head) was symbolic of the unity of body, psyche, soul and heart. Amulets in these ornaments were believed to bring good and prevent evil. The ancient folk believed that a drawn hand or eye could protect them against the evil eye, ward off evil and procure happiness and good.

In this epoch, the Egyptian manufacturer was known for his artistic finesse and beauty of formation of his products. His raw materials were drawn from nature: papyrus, palm trees, lotus, and the like. In Dahshour(in Egypt) some monuments [belonging to Princess Khiphomint(of the Twelfth Dynasty)] were excavated, which demonstrated the finesse of manufacturing. They are made of metals inlaid with precious and semiprecious stones(The Egyptian museum). Hence, the Phoenicians and the Greeks adopted their style of granulation.

The Modern Pharaonic State(1580-1090 B.C) :

There was a boom all over the country. Therefore, all the people wore ornaments. Men wore rings, earrings and necklaces of beads. Also the Pharaohs used gold a lot, especially in the Kings and Queens' jewellery which was superb and various. Tut Ankh Amun's treasures reveal these characteristics.(The 18 th Dynasty).

With the advent of the 19th. Dynasty, silver was used for making jewellery. Margaret Murry ascribed this to poverty, and also to the belief that it has magic benefits.

Ornaments in the Ptolemaic Age(332-30 B.C.)::

After Alexander the Great had conquered Egypt, the jewellery industry developed at the hands of Egyptian and Greek jewellers. However, the Greek manufacturers learned from the Egyptians and adopted their styles and expertise in this field.

Snake - like bracelets became popular: types of these are available at the Egyptian Museum. The Ptolemies took interest in precious stones, and the Emerald Island was discovered in The Red Sea. Queen Cleopatra(69-30 B.C) is famous for her jewellery collection and her palace which was inlaid with pecious stones. The art of engraving on such stones flourished in Alexandria, which was one of the biggest centres for gems and precious stones.

The Roman Age(30 B.C - 640 A.D) :

Under the Roman rule Egypt became impoverished. Hence, cheap metals like bronze, brass and silver prevailed in jewellery making. However, gold, and gold and silver coins were still in use.

Also beads made of glass, ivory and porcelain were used in different colours and shapes. Amulets of silver and white and blue glass were used to protect people against the evil eye.

The Byzantine and Coptic Era :

Christianity got into Egypt in (61 A.D.) and many Egyptians got christianized accordingly. However, the Romans opposed it at first until Emperor Constantine I got converted to Christendom, which was declared the official religion of the Byzantine State. All arts, jewellery included, were influenced by this religion; Christian symbols such as the cross, fish, pigeon, tame animals, vine leaves and grape bunches, and the sights of saints and apostles - these all went into the making of Roman and



An earring with hearts, commonly used in Egypt

Commonly used jewels in the valley - An earring with a turquoise stone - Cleopatra necklace

Coptic jewellery. In the Coptic Museum there is a grape bunch-like earring. Nowadays people still wear this pattern. Also some earrings take the cross shape. Most jewels are made of silver or cheap metal. Amulets were shaped like a crescent to the centre of which a bronze cross was added.

The Pre- Islamic Jewellery:

Trade constituted a link between Egypt and the Arab Peninsula even before Egyptians were converted to Islam. Many Arab traders came to Upper Egypt via the Red Sea. The Pre-Islamic people wore ornaments and believed in spirits and the damage of women's and children's eyes. For them an amulet was an ornament that protected their eyes. But men could protect their eyes without amulets. The Yemeni traders used to buy precious stones from India and garnet from Estern Africa and then sell them to the Egyptians.

Jewellery in Islam:

In Islam women are allowed to wear silver and gold jewels. For men, only silver rings are allowed.

As the Islamic State extended to include Syria, Iraq, Persia, India, Egypt and Lebanon, its soico-economic and industrial conditions thrived. So did the arts, especially of jewellery making. This was due to the abundance of gold and silver in Khurasan, ruby in Turkistan, garnet in Yemen, chrysolite in Egypt, pearls in Bahrein and corals in the Arab Peninsula, and also metals and precious stones in India and Ceylon.

The Caliphs in Baghdad lived in luxury. Baghdad was a market-place of gems. It was said that Haroun Al-Rashid's sister wore head coverings decorated with gems, which was later emulated by women of all classes. It can even be said that veils with silver or gold amulets worn by folk women had their roots in the Abbasid epoch. Sinai female bedouins, for example, wear head coverings decorated with metal coins. In this regard Dr. Abdel Hamid Younis states, "Many are the literary and artistic types adopted and cherished by the masses, which were originally the upper classes' products".

Jewellery in Islamic Egypt:

With the coming of the Arabs to Egypt (64 A.D.) the Islamic arts were at first influenced by the Coptic artistic products, and then kept their unique Islamic type. Jewellers adopted new styles and shapes.

Ornaments in the Fatimid Era:

In this period, adornments were shaped like a crescent. Rings had inscriptions like "ma shaa Allah"(It's God's will) and "Allah Khair Hafez"(There is no protector like God).

The Ayubide era(1171-1250 A.D) reproduced more or less the Fatimid adornments. Also the Memeluki epoch was characterized by ornaments that were similar to those produced during the Fatimid and the Ayubide periods. Their most dominant style(named "shiftishi"(filigree)) was the dantilla lace with geometrical shapes decorated with precious stones. And due to trade relations between Egypt and China, ornaments were influenced, to some extent, by Chinese styles.

Under the Ottoman rule(1517 A.D) Egyptian and Islamic crafts and arts declined. The rich class emulated the Western people and imported their jewellery from them accordingly. Of course this influenced the local products.

Cairo and Jewellery Making:

Cairo was a centre for making ornaments. This industry flourished greatly under the Fatimid rulers who held banquets and handed out gold generously. Manufacturers used gold and silver for making coins, bracelets, rings and earrings. The Cairene products were so dexterously designed and finely shaped that the Fatimid Cairo excelled Baghadad and Cordoba and became the centre of the Islamic world accordingly.

Also trade with India thrived during the

A collection of popular earrings
(The Egyptian Geographical Society Museum)

Memeluki era. Consequently, customs duty increased and the economic life flourished. However, with the advent of the Ottomans, industry suffered and eventually got impoverished due to the Ottoman policy of transporting all skilled craftsmen and artists to Constantinople. Also all treasures of the palaces and mosques were plundered and carried away.

The Turks and Memelukes lived in luxury and pomp; they amassed jewels, gems, and the most precious adornments. According to Al-Gabarty, when Aly Bey escaped to Syria, he carried away three hundred thousand pieces in gold and jewellery worth three million gold pieces, and the dagger's handle was worth two hundred thousand gold pieces.

This was at a time when the Egyptian masses suffered from poverty and disease.

Many were the adornments and jewels marketplaces. They were basically made of gold and silver. Elsagha(jewellers' place) both in Cairo and Alexandria, is the most famous centre for gold and silver work.

Jewellery Handicraft :

Originally, gold and silver jewellers were Jews and Armenians. Also Egyptian Copts manufactured gold and silver adornments. The Islamic rulers encouraged those jewellers and had them set up their guilds.

The Armenian jewellers emigrated from Turkey out of religious harassment and bigotry to Egypt; they brought with them a lot of Turkish and European styles and models. However, today this work is confined to Egyptian Copts and Muslims, and it is inherited within the family members.

Significantly, Mohamed Aly Pasha established a school for teaching crafts and arts; he also sent young men to Europe to master such crafts and arts.

Jewellery during the French Expedition:

When the French Expedition came to Egypt, adornments underwent some changes. However, they were still made of gold, silver or gold- plated copper. They were mostly used as amulets. Earrings, nose-rings, and necklaces were inscribed with Koranic verses, which had a protective purpose. Also the Koran was kept in gold or silver cases, something which is still done today. Amulets and charms were very commonly used to ward off evil and bring good and happiness. Magic formulas among lovers became a very common practice. Thus, adornments had a twofold job: beautification and protection. Edward Lane tells us about gold or silver charms.

Jewellery in the Nineteenth Century:

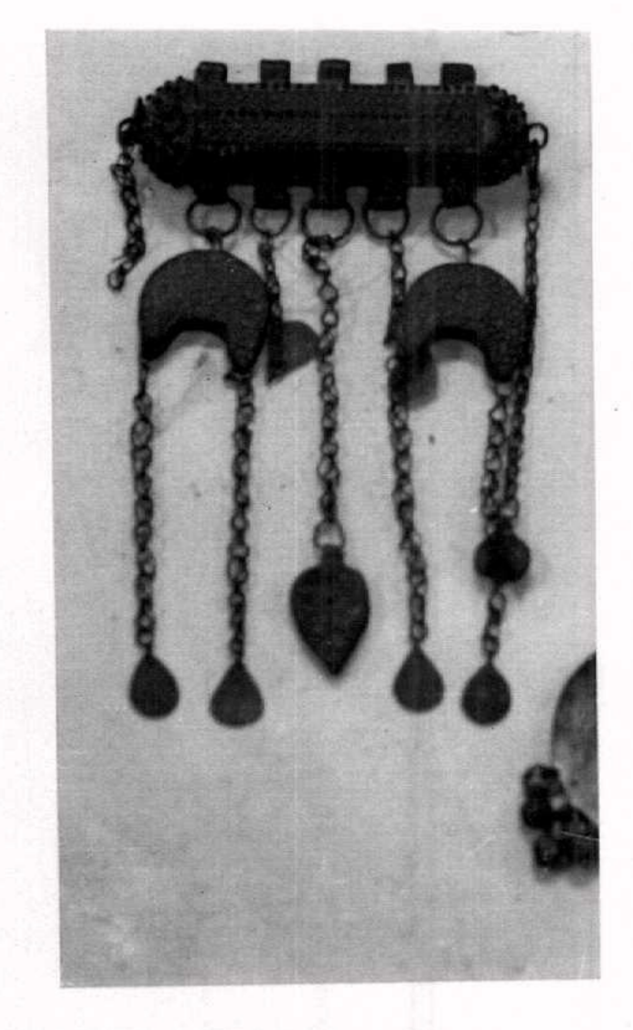
According to Edward Lane, ornaments were made of copper, colour beads, silver and metal coins. Peasant women wore earrings and nose rings made of such materials.

Egyptians used charms for their magical power; such charms were basically taken from the Koran verses. They were square-or triangle-shaped and made of gold. The rich used to buy gold jewellery for their daughters as part of their trousseau. Brides were escorted to a popular bath-place, with their heads covered with an adorned veil.

Ornaments in Marriage Today :

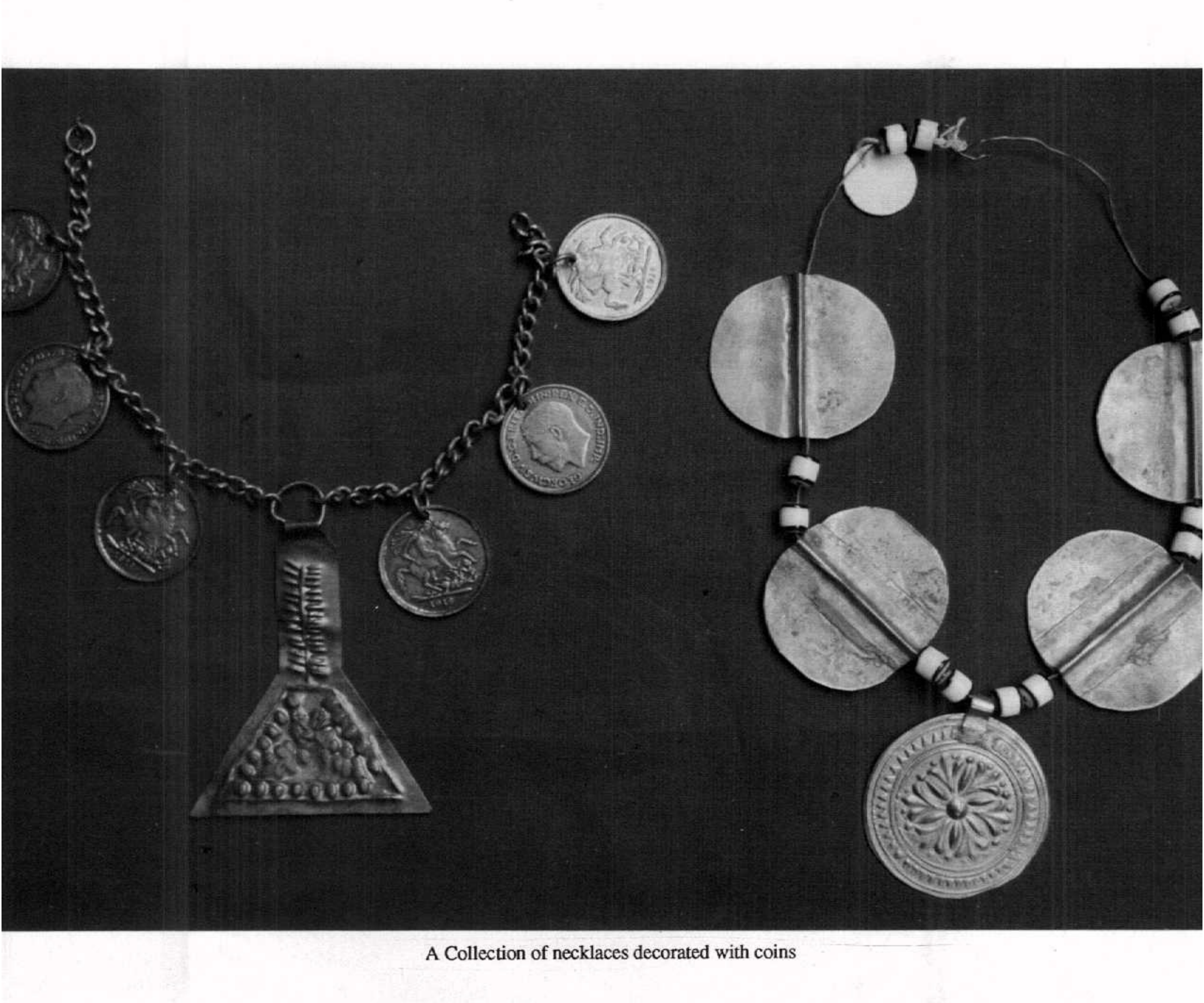
In nuptials ceremonies ornaments are very important. They indicate the couple's financial status. Jewellery constitutes an essential part of the trousseau, as it is indicative of a family's social standing; the more expensive, the more proud they become before their nieghbours. On the wedding day, the bride wears a necklace, a ring or a bracelet. In Nubia the bride wears the most important piece of jewellery on which "The Merciful's Story " is inscribed. In the rural society, silver and gold ornaments are very common.

In an urban society, the engagement ring is



A pendant in the shape of a fish, and five 'khiyaras' for protection against envy





A Collection of necklaces decorated with coins

an emblem of a young couple's emotional attachment. In Sinai, the female Bedouins' veil adorned with chain distinguishes married women from the unmarried ones, who wear unadorned cloth veils. These veils differ from tribe to tribe. Significantly, a bride's gold jewellery functions as a sort of saved money, which she resorts to when she undergoes financial straits. As a cover-up for this, she buys gold-plated adornments which resemble the sold gold jewellery.

Symbols in Popular Jewellery :

Ornaments indicate a people's customs and traditions and their development. Also they express the immediate milieu and ambience of their makers; they may symbolize a significant feature, happening or custom of their societies or groups. The following are some of the recurrent shapes in folk drawings and ornaments:

A fish is symbolic of opulence of offspring and the welfare of society.

A pigeon symbolizes peace and recalls The Prophet's "hijra" (immigration) (when two pigeons built their nest at the entrance of the cave where prophet Mohamed and his companion took refuge. Thus, the enemies did not think of the cave as the Prophet's hiding place).

-Plants are a symbol of means of living.

- A lion symbolizes courage.

- A palm is symbolic of protection against the evil eye.

- A star symbolizes the universe and is related to prophets' birth.

- A crescent was used in Ancient Egypt as an amulet against magic and the evil eye. In Islamic Egypt it relates to the birth of the moon which marks the beginning of the ' Hijra ' months of fasting, pilgrimage, festivities and The Prophet's Birthday celebration(" Al-mouid").

- The moon is symbolic of life itself, with its two complementary aspects : birth and death.

- A flower is an anti-envy symbol.

Also shapes have certain significations in folkloric beliefs :

A triangle, a reminder of the pyramid, is symbolic of the sun god (in Pharaonic Egypt), of the Trinity(in Coptic Egypt) and of sublimity (in Islamic Egypt).

- A square is a symbol of order and stability. It also indicates the four directions and four seasons.

Also, for the folk artist odd numbers, especially five and seven, are significant. The former is used against envy and the evil eye, and the latter is attached to optimism, as it relates to the seven days of the creation of the universe.

Models of Folk Ornaments in Certain Geographical Regions in Egypt :

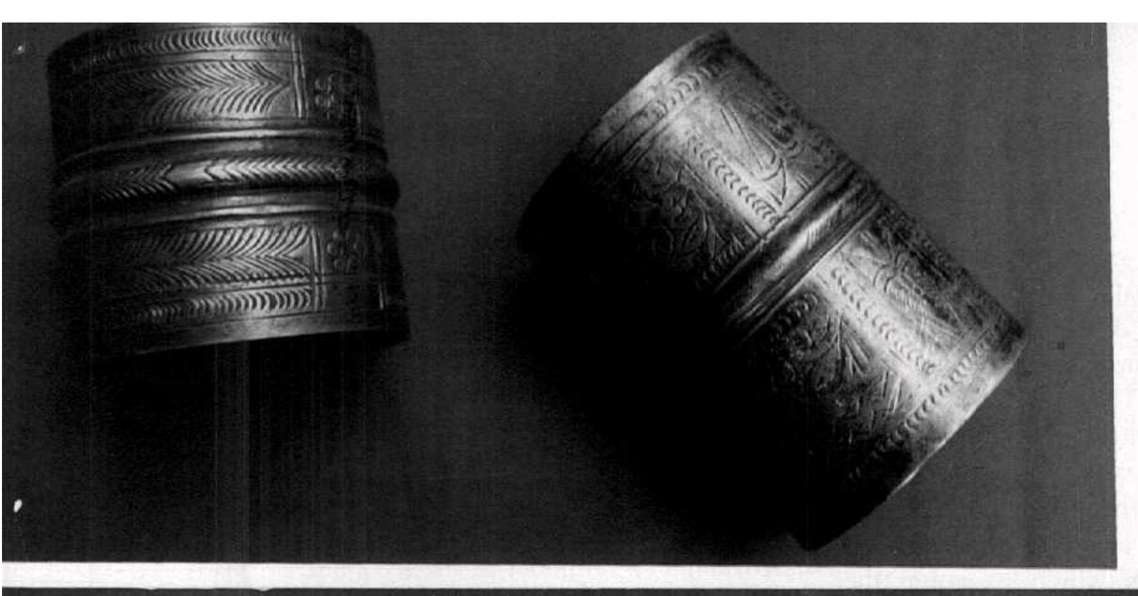
The Western North Coast Region :

It extends from Al-Ameria in the west until El- Saloum and the Egyptian borders with Libya. In this area live Awlad Ali tribes, whose women wear bedouin clothes and ornaments (mostly of silver).For their covering, they wear a leather ribbon with crescent adornments hanging on both sides, from which silver chains are dangling(hence, this ornament is called "A bell with jingles ").

For their chest ornaments, women wear a crescent-shaped silver necklace with triangular pieces dangling from it ; the crescents are connected by a string of red beads. It is called "Hilil " necklace (Arabic equivalent of a crescent).

" Al-zariga " Ornament is made of longitudinal rows of coloured beads, and it is worn around the neck.

Women also wear a red woolen belt around



The damlag bracelet



Acollection of inscribed silver rings

A collection of amulets for head ornament and protection from envy and evil eye



The " virgin's disk or the " agro - orm ". When a girl gets married, she gives the disk to her unmarried sister





Asilver ornament that is hung on the chest . Notice the shape of the star

A Silver ornament that is hung on the chest Jrom the north valley

their waists; they fix these belts with a silver adornment called " Khalil Wazer". It is a rectangular silver case with a pin at one end and some chains at the other. Women put charms or perfume in these cases.

Women wear broad silver bracelets on their wrists ; they have plants-like inscriptions, since plants in a desert environment are the main source of life. The size of these bracelets indicates a woman's financial status.

They also wear silver nose-rings called "Shinaf or Shinif ". And for their legs, they wear ornamental silver bangles called " Khulkhal ".

Siwa Oasis :

It is located in the Western Desert and links up with Marsa Matrouh via a land route. People in this area were cut off from the civilized outside world until the turn of the twentieth century. A young woman in Siwa shapes her hair into plaits which may sometimes amount to 33 plaits, and adorns her forehead with several amulets.

Also she wears special silver adornments when visiting. These ornaments sometimes weigh three or four kilograms.

In this area there are no jewellers ; they get their ornaments from Alexandria in Egypt and Bani Ghazi in Libya.

For head ornaments, women wear a veil of coloured beads with a silver palm hanging over the forehead to protect against envy. The "Talaqin " is a big crescent - shaped ornamental piece worn over the head with two pendants on both sides of a woman's face. At the end of each pendant there are 19 jingles(Museum of The Centre).

For their hair decoration women wear a silver ornament adorned with amber and a triangle pendant with chains, beads and jingles. It is called "Pouval".

Around their necks, they wear a big number of ornamental pieces, such as the "Salihiat " necklace, which is similar to that worn by women in Marsa Matrouh.

The "Khiyara " amulet is a cylindrical silver ornament with chains, jingles(8) and palms (7), used by women for decoration and protection against envy.

The "agro-orm " is a silver band with a sun-disk-shaped adornment called "The virgins' disk ". On getting married, a woman gives the disk to an unmarried young lady from her family to wear.

The amber necklace with its various colours(red, yellow, brown, black and silver) has some semi- circular inscriptions at the centre of its silver piece.

The "God's will " amulet is made of garnet, with chains and jingles dangling for ornamental and protection purposes.

On the wrist, women wear the " damlag " bracelet, which is made of silver. They also wear multi- shaped silver rings on their fingers.

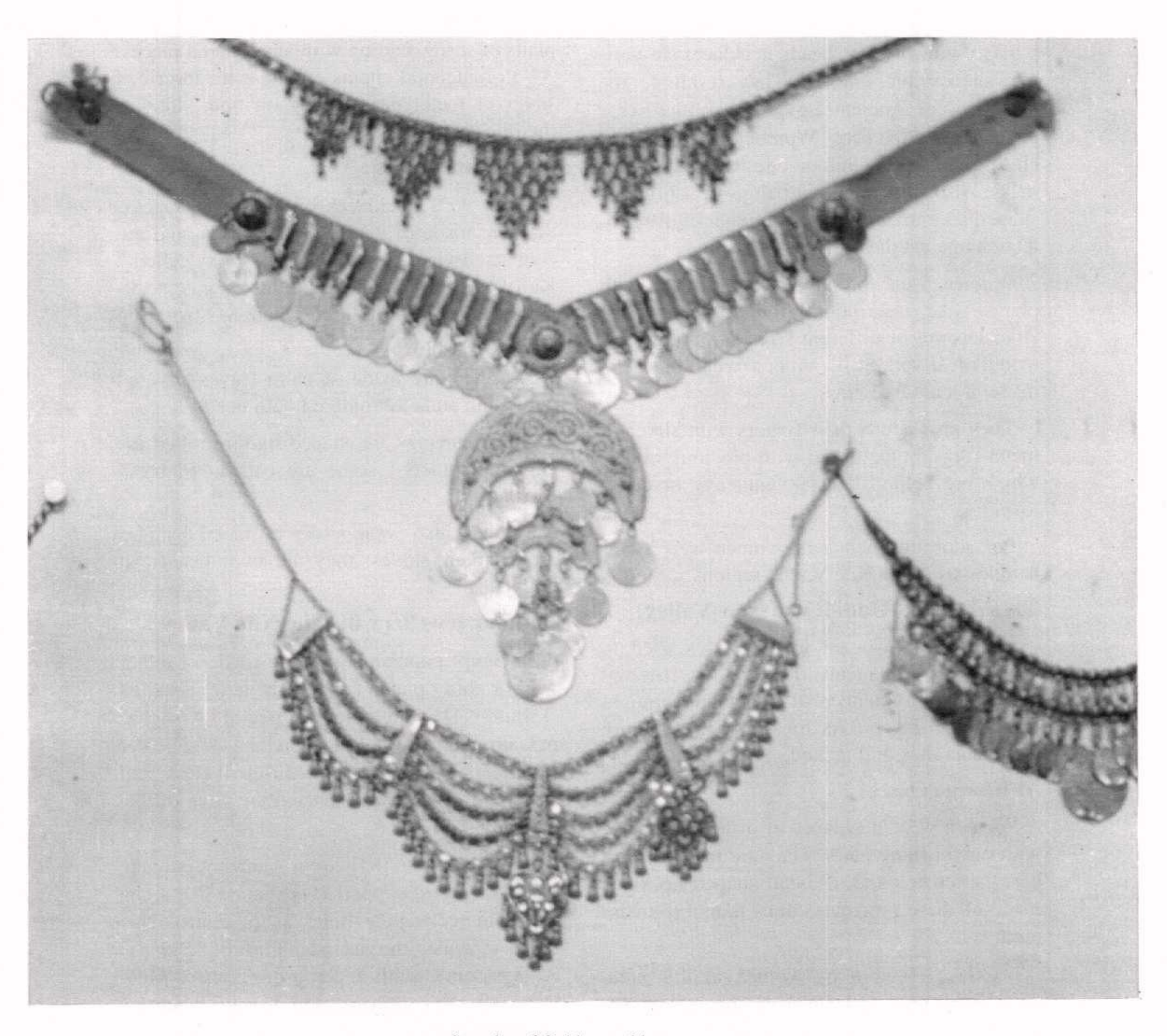
Al- Bahariya Oases :

They lie in the Western Desert 180 kilometres west of Samalout and 325 kilometres south west of Giza. People here live in four towns. Women show concern over their decoration and they wear silver ornaments.

On both sides of her head, a woman places silver palms. For adorning her hair, she uses plaits of strings, intertwined with fine lead rings. Also a rectangular ornamental piece, with the word "God" on it, is added to the plaits.

She also wears a silver nosering, or it may be made of gold and shaped like a crescent, fixed at the end of a circular disk.

Earrings are made of silver and are of different shapes : the "sakieh" and the "pakloul " earrings.



Samples of Golden necklaces.

Also women wear beads necklaces, in various shapes and colours. They resemble the necklaces of Ancient Egypt. They also wear bands around the neck. Women embellish their chests with triangular or circular amulets(for luck). Also they may put palm - or scorpion - shaped adornments around their necks, for protection against the scorpion's poison.

Women wear broad silver bracelets with plants- like inscription around their wrists. Bracelets are of different sizes and are mostly made of silver. Still, women wear bracelets made of coloured glass.

They also adorn their fingers with silver or metal rings, embellished with precious stones, which are believed to prevent envy or cause love.

For adorning their legs, women wear silver bangles, as in the Nile Valley regions.

Al- Wady Al- Gadid(The New Valley) :

In the past, women in the Oases used to wear silver ornaments. Later, they bartered them for adornments that merchants brought from Upper-Egypt. As for silver itself, those merchants took and melted.

Al-Kharga Oases :

Women wear necklaces of different shapes, with one or more rows. They are made of amber, garnet or coral. A heart-shaped necklace made of these precious stones is highly treasured

necklace is worn by women in this area. Also silver balls and chains can hang from it.

Earrings are made of silver, and their names go with their sizes : the big " kharas " and the medium "Dandash ".

Women also wear silver bracelets in different sizes and shapes, with different inscriptions.

Also they wear silver rings inlaid with various colour stones.

Women embellish their hair by wearing plaits of string, ending with small metal pieces. Also ornamental chains ending with inscribed silver or metal pieces hang on both sides of their heads.

Al-Dakhla Oases :

Women wear necklaces of different shapes ; they are made of garnet or red beads, and are connected via cylinderical metal links called " Kubat Al- Robi ". There are also coral necklaces, with old silver coins hanging from the coral rows.

Bracelets are made of palm leaves covered with cloth and embroidered with beads.

Silver earrings are shaped like inscribed triangular amulets ; some are called "Batbat " earrings.

Women also wear silver or metal bangles around their ankles; they are two- headed at both ends.

Popular jewellery in The Nile Valley :

In Egypt popular jewels are made of either gold or gold - plated copper (the latter is called "kishra"). They are manufactured at "Assagha" in Cairo and Alexandria. Merchants and pedlar jewelleers exhibit and sell different types and shapes of ornaments. Hence, they have different names:

The " Shubak Al-Hussein " earring is made of gold - plated copper. It is shaped like a circle, with rectangular holes at its centre. This name indicates the sacred nature of "Sidna " Al- Hussein's tomb and mosque, where Muslims tell their prayers and invoke God for grace and help.

The " Khatem Sulayman " earring is made of gold - plated copper shaped like the star of David. Wester Mark states that a triangle stands for an eye; so by having two triangles that intersect in a point, a centre is formed, which is a protection against the evil eye.

The fan ("marwaha") earring is made of gold- plated copper shaped like a star and crescent (which used to symbolize Islam and the



Commonly used jewels in the valley - An earring with a turquoise stone - Cleopatra necklace

Turkish flag). It has seven pendants, which is a lucky number.

Shaped like a band or a chain, necklaces are one of the most ancient popular ornaments. In the far past, man believed in the magic power of bone amulets; he believed they could protect him against evil spirits or natural powers. Also, they could bring him health and happiness.

Today man still uses chains and pendants for carrying amulets or Koranic verses. Examples of these items are to be found in the Egyptian Museum and Al- Antougraph Museum.

Edward Lane describes the " Labiba " necklace in his book about popular adornments, and it is still in use today.

Another popular one is the "peasant crescents " necklace. It is shaped like a crescent.

The "bizrat and arousa " necklace is also popular. It is also called Cleopatra necklace.

The "esh bi'awarid " necklace is very popular in both rural and urban societies. It is made of gold-plated copper. So is the "samalak bisamaka" necklace. They are used as amulets for both Muslims and Copts. There is also the hab zaiton" (an olive) necklace, used by both rural and Bedouin women.

Bracelets were first made of animal bone. Also the ancient Egyptian artist excelled at making bracelets of metals and beads. The Egyptians have inherited this art, and some of the old shapes are still in vogue to day.

The "thu'ban" bracelet is widely worn by the Egyptian woman ; it is shaped like a snake, with a head and tail. Also, they wear a snake - like bracelet, with two heads - a bracelet which is made in Alexandria. Made in Suhag (Upper Egypt), this bracelet is made of gold or copper, and it has a round watch-like lock. Also, women wear a plaited bracelet, ending with a heart-like piece.

Rings :

Both men and women wear rings ; however, they are different in shapes. The Ancient Egyptians wore ornamental rings; some of the monuments found in their tombs bore this out. Men used their rings as signets (signetrings) for authenticating documents.

Rings are made of copper, silver or gold; also precious stones are added for luck and protection.

Bangles :

Only Bedouin and rural women wear bangles in Egypt today.

Sinai :

The Pharaohs exploited the Sinai mines of metals and precious stones, which they used for making their ornaments and jewellery. Sinai is therefore known as the land of turquoise. It is inhabited by various tribes now. The tribes' costumes and ornaments constitute their token. Also they indicate the individual's social standing within the tribe.

In Sinai women take very good care of their dress and decoration. They always wear their hair in plaits, ending with silk strings, which are decorated with coloured beads. They also wear a band studded with metal or silver coins, which hang on both sides of their head.

Bedouin women do not wear earrings. Instead, they wear a group of chains, placed on both sides of the face.

Women wear nose- rings ("ashnaf") made of gold or silver. They have circular embossments, from which seven jingles hang .

Also, they wear various types of necklaces. They are made of amber, coral or coloured beads, interlaced with silver balls. From the centre of these necklaces inscribed silver disks- cum -amulets dangle.

They also wear a cloth band with rectangular metal pieces around their necks. From it circular metal pieces dangle. Also, it has two crescent - like metal pendants.

Believing in luck and the evil eye, bedouin women wear amulets, which are small trian-

gles of coloured beads hung on the head or fixed on the chest. They also wear big rectangular amulets around the neck. They also wear silver or metal bracelets, which are of different shapes and sizes. Bracelets are also made of glass.

The Bedouin woman also wears various silver or metal rings studded with turquoise or garnet stones, which are believed to bring love or luck or prevent envy.

Stones are also believed to remedy diseases: for the treatment of eyes, breasts, and wounds. Also, there is the "sebou" ceremony (on the seventh day of an infant's birth), where a conical jar ("Kullah ") is decorated with flowers and studded with gold or silver adornments, and lit candles surround it.

Nubia :

It is a border region between Egypt and Sudan. The Kinouz, the Arabs and the Fadadga constitute the inhabitants of the Egyptian part of Nubia. In the Sudanese part live the Magsan, the Scot and the Danagla groups. However, groups in Nubia - both Egyptian and Sudanese - are connected through marriage, trade, kinship, immigration, and the like.

According to Burkhardt,the Nubians are originally from the Arab Peninsula who invaded Egypt with the spread of Islam. Also some of them originally came from the Libyan desert.

Possibly, when they first arrived into this area, they brought with them their own patterns of ornaments, which belong to the Arab Maghrib(north west Africa) artistic traditions, some of which are similar to those of Phoenicia and Carthage.

The Nubian society is conservative. This may be due to the fact that it is a matriarchal society; women work both indoors and outdoors, while their husbands always travel to Cairo to stay there and leave their families behind.

The Nubian women's ornaments differ according to the group they belong to. A woman from the Kinouz group, for example, wears an outfit called " Alshagma". It is made of white cloth and it is worn ove125 another coloured dress("gilbab") ; the outer dress is fixed at the left shoulder with a pin called "hilal " or " halala".

The "halala " is a silver pin(clasp), connected to a big crescent, a star or a triangle piece, from which a number of chains dangle, and ending with a fish, which is a symbol of good. Formerly, it used to end with a wallet called "alzawia"(the angle).

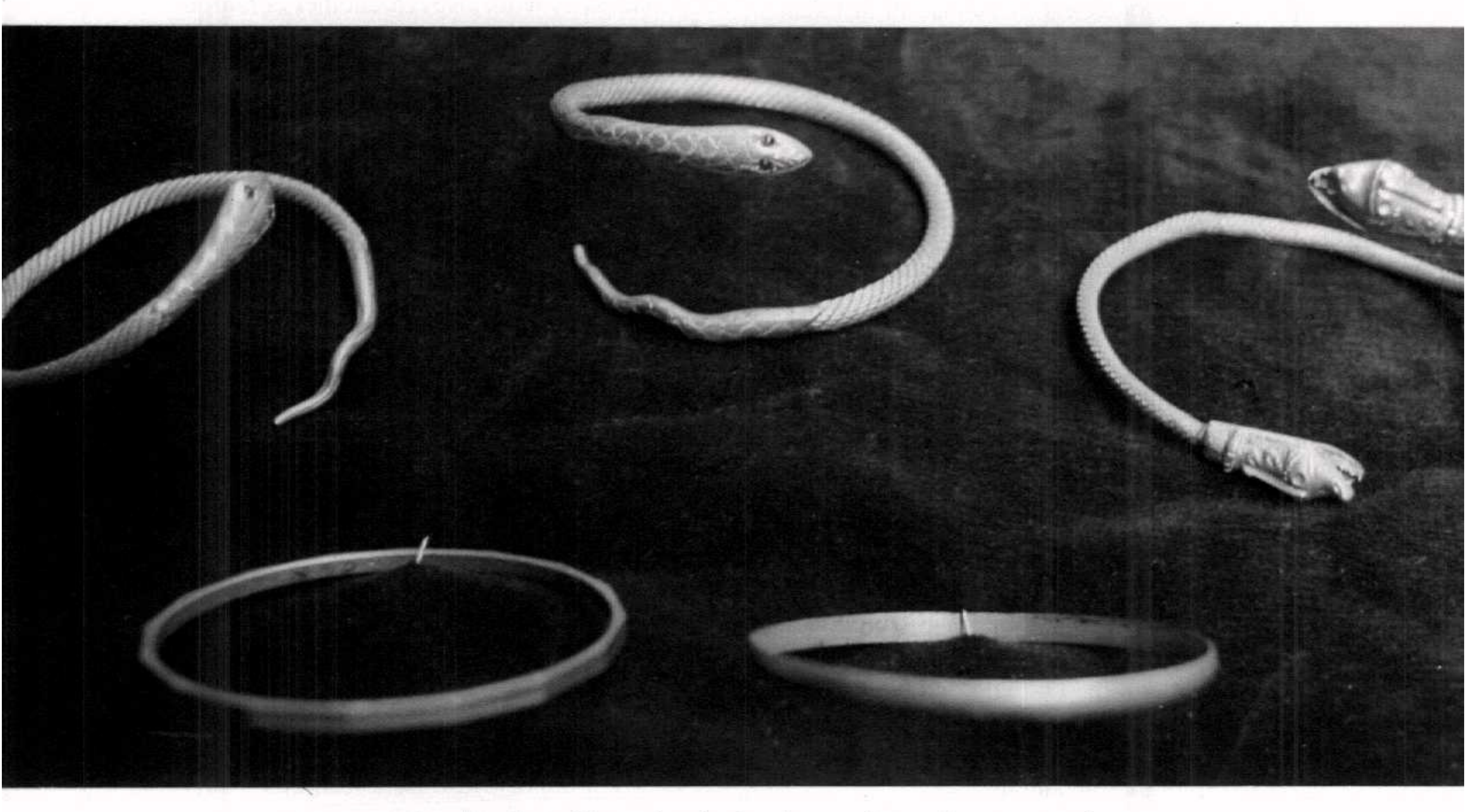
As for women in the Fadadga group, they wear an outfit called "algargar" above the coloured dresses underneath. The outer outfit is made of light black cloth, which covers the ankles,and as they walk, it wipes their footsteps, so that they may not be followed by evil spirits.

They wear ornamental earrings made of gold, which are crescent - shaped. Some women wear two earrings, whereas others wear only one.

The Nubians take special interest in the crescent and hold it in high esteem, as it is a symbol of Islam; they call it "Agraboba " (which means the big moon). Women treasure their earrings, and they hardly sell them, as this is seen to be something shameful or disgraceful. Whenever they go to a happy occasion as a wedding party, they wear almost all of their ornaments. For their heads, they have an ornamental band made of coloured beads, worn at the end of their hair,from which some strings of beads hang.It is called "Shaw Shaw' or "Shoush Kinzi".

Also, they wear an ornamental piece called "alrassda" over their foreheads. It is a chain of circular gold pieces, with another triangular gold piece at its centre.

"Kisat Alrahman " (the story of the Merciful) is another similar ornament which is made of gold and worn only by married women. Also, another adornment is a chain with six



A collection of bracelets in the shape of a snake, commonly used in the valley

sterling -pound-like pieces and a triangular piece at its centre. Women wear it over their foreheads. The folk artist believes that the triangle in this ornament is meant to protect women against the evil eye.

The "wadaa"(seashell) ·ornament is made of gold and is 60 c.m. It consists of two closed box-like triangles, which are connected with another box, from which hang seven pear- like pendants. Women wear it for beautification and for protection against the evil eye. For her nose, a woman wears a gold ornamental piece called "zamama"; it is worn in the right nostril. This piece has two possible shapes : an inscribed circle or a lathe.

For her chest/neck, the Nubian woman wears a lot of ornamental gold necklaces. For example, the "biba "(the glittering) necklace is made of gold.It consists of six pear-like gold pieces, with protrusive inscriptions shaped like stars. From its middle a circular pendant with a flower inscribed on it hangs. Amongst the

petals of these drawn flower is drawn a plam tree.

Also, women wear "algakd" necklace. It is made of gold or gold- plated copper, with six circular pieces. Another circular piece is placed at the centre, so as the figure becomes 7, which is a lucky number. It links up with the Koranic number 7, which is related to the seven days of the week, the story of the creation, and the seven Heavens mentioned in the Koran. Also, they wear "alnakar" necklace, which consists of seven gold pieces shaped like a flower. It has a crescent-like pendant ; this pendant could also be circular, and it is called "farag Allah" (God's grace). Formerly, it was a foreign coin called "magar ".

The "saafa "(a palmleaf) necklace is a gold ornament worn around the neck. It consists of nine units, which are surrounded by five little stars. It is worn mostly by poor women. Another ornament is called "alhafiza "(the protecting), which is made of silver. On it is written such phrases as : "I fully count on God ", "In the Name of Allah" and "What God wills" and "God, the protector, the Honest".

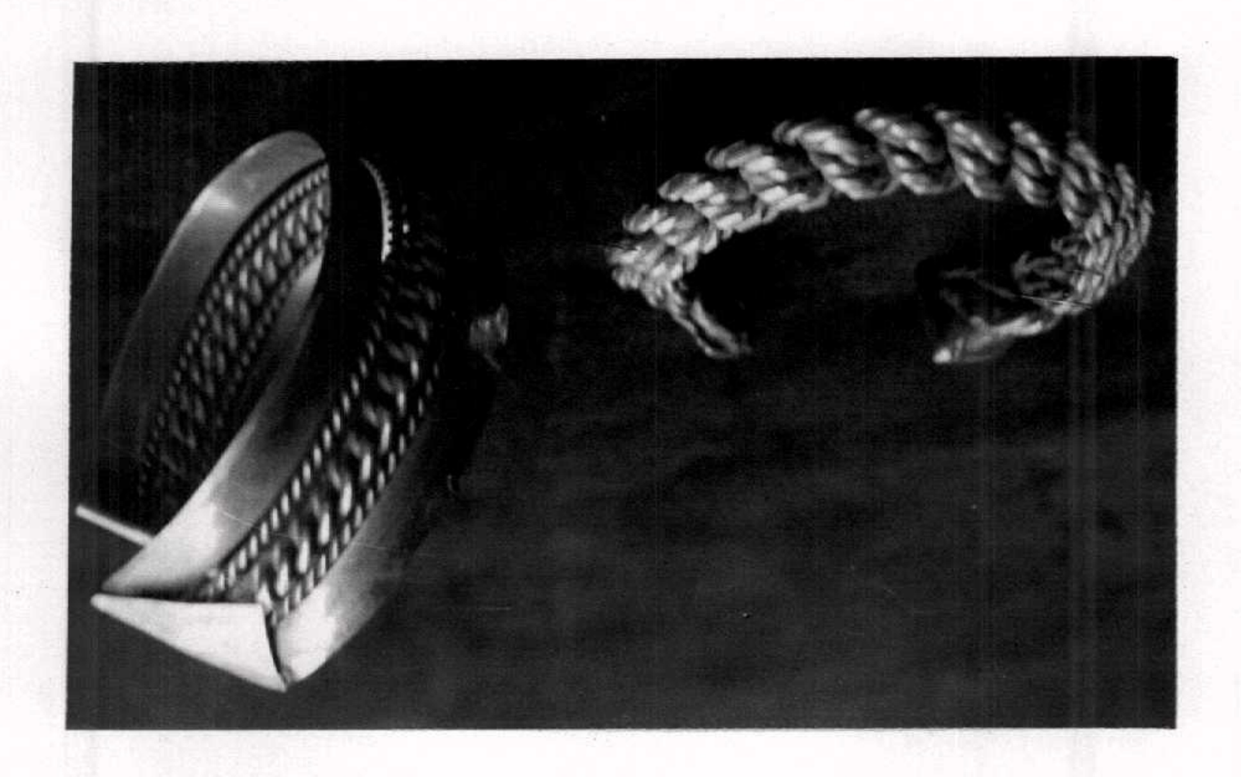
The "dogaa" necklace is made of 21 carat gold. It consists of a number of barley grains and six rectangular boxes. Originally, it is a pharaonic ornament.

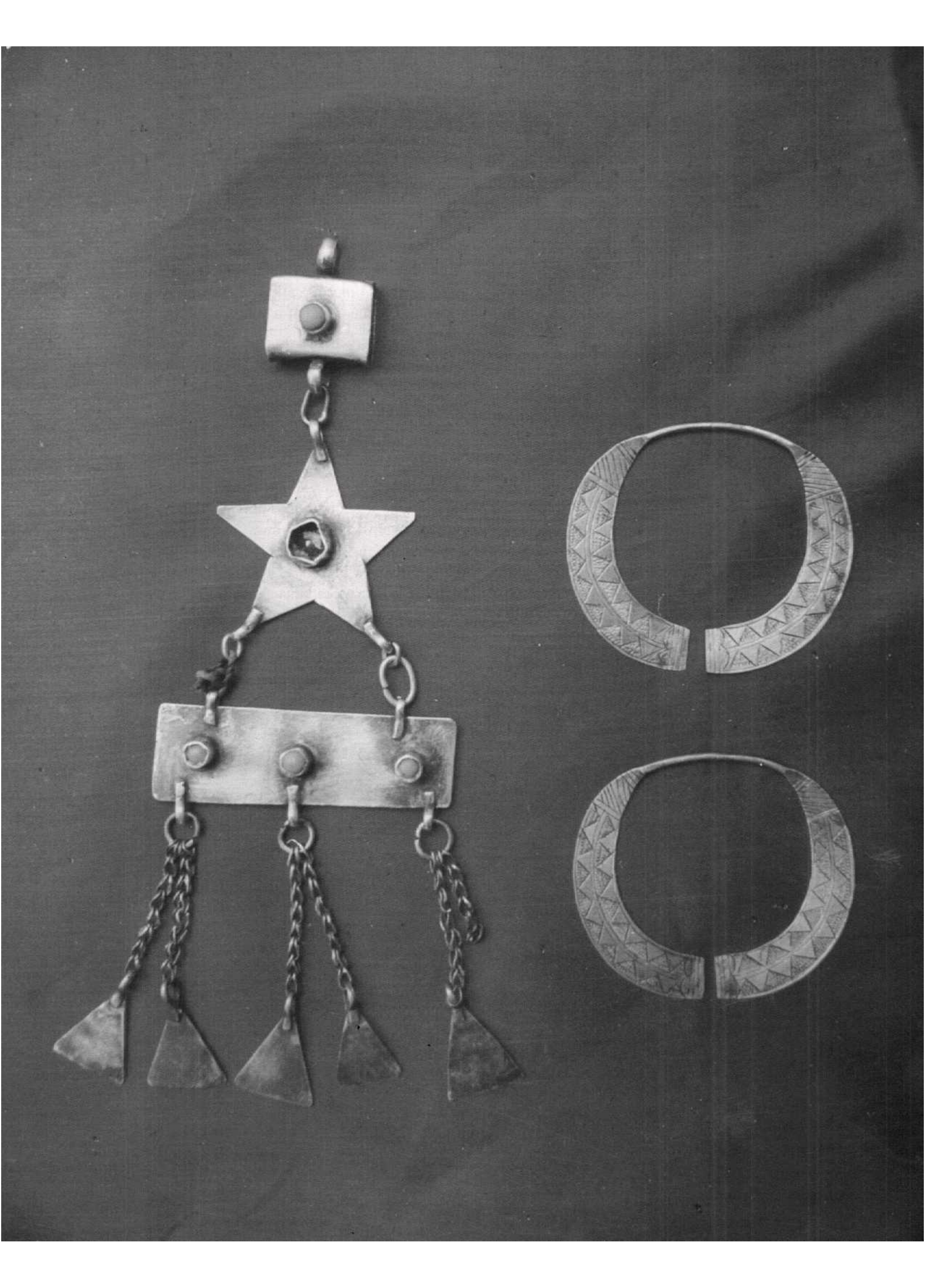
On her hand, the Nubian woman wears a gold or silver bracelet called "kobat zamzam"(" zamzam " is the name of a holy well in Islam).

She wears a silver ring on her finger with five lathes; it is similar to the "Kobat Zamzam" bracelet. For the folk artist, 5 is a lucky number and it protects against the evil eye.

Also the bridegroom buys his bride silver bangles which she wears around her ankles.

Women also wear silver amulets, which are shaped like a cucumber. They are believed to protect against diseases and envy. From this amulet five jingles dangle. It is fixed by a pin. Also, there is a blue bead with seven holes for hanging silver pendants and jingles. Also, women wear a plastic amulet to prevent envy. Its colours are yellow, red, green, white and dark blue. It is an ornament made of beads, and of intertwined rhombus shapes. It may be also a leather bag for keeping the charm.





POPULAR FURNITURE

BY Dr. Zeinab Higazy



The Egyptian popular furniture pieces reflect the Egyptian's rich sense of beauty; they also indicate his inherited dexterity in this industry, whether of wood or mud.

The immediate upshot of this historical fact is that the Egyptian home always has some furniture pieces with decorative units rich in colour and design.

The furnishing style adopted by the popular home is in accord with the latest modern trends in this field, which tend to see the furniture as a natural extension of the walls and space.

One's residence constitutes an important component of our folk tradition; it forms the foundation of the whole society, with its different strata. Hence, it has been cherished ever since the ancient times.

The ancient Egyptian was so dexterous that he is still emulated by furniture designers in modern Egypt.

Although wood is scant in Egypt, our furniture is fine. The high quality and finesse of our ancient products derive from the dexterity and grandeur of the pieces excavated from ancient tombs.

This is borne out by the wall drawings of these tombs, where woodworkers can be seen sawing the wood shaping it, woodcarving,

painting and polishing the furniture pieces. Also, it is supported by the fact that today's furniture maker still uses

some of the structures used by his predecessors, such as the dowel, the wedge, the mortice and tenon, and the dovetail.

After the Egyptians had been converted to Christianity, the Egyptian Copts inherited the furniture industry from their Pharaonic ancestors and developed it on a scientific basis.

With the advent of Islam to Egypt, the furniture manufacturer created wonderful movable platforms, coffins, windows, and doors for the mosques. He also manufactured fine domestic furniture pieces. Hence, turning and filling work spread, which led to the production of different types and shapes of decorative woodwork. For example, there are "al-arnas", "al-matlout", "al-ariga", and "al-warda". These fine types of woodwork are made of turneries. Also neat "mashrabiyyas" (wooden oriels) were created so as women can watch the outside world from behind these wooden enclosures and yet nobody can see them. Also, due to the latticework of the oriels light and air could pass into the house.

Also wide and fine turneries were used for making beautiful geometrical shapes, Koranic verses, or shapes of birds or animals or utensils. With these turneries engraved and carved stuffings were used to make decorative abstract units of birds, where the difference of shade and light and the variety of decorations created the sense of plastic art utility.

The furniture manufacturer was not only manually dexterous, but he also knew the natural changes of wood: expansion, contraction and curvature. He also used carving for tying up the ends of the stuffings. He also tied up small furniture pieces by carving without using glue or nails.

Also he had some geometrical and scientific knowledge, which enabled him to adapt certain mathematical rules for designing and making architectural patterns for doors, windows and fences. He also made wonderful shapes of benches, chairs, tables, oriel windows, doors, and other furniture pieces .

He decorated such furniture with ebony, ivory, shell, copper, silver and gold. What is worth mentioning here is that the furniture patterns found so far-Pharaonic, Coptic or Islamic-belonged to the kings, rulers and upper classes.

As for the furniture of the masses, there is hardly any left. Popular furniture has its roots in our folkloric tradition; it met certain material as well as spiritual needs.

Furnishing a house means providing it with all types (both fixed or movable) of furniture which man needs in his domestic life: sleeping, eating, receiving visitors, storing, and the like. Also it includes items such as lines, covers, sheets, brushes, utensils, lighting and cooking tools, and others, which are necessary for man's comfort, utility, and pleasure.

Due to regional differences (rural, desert, urban and oasis). furniture differs accordingly: design, shape, materials used, contents, and ways of manufacturing.

At the extreme south of the Nile Valley lies the Egyptian Nubia, where three tribes live: Al-kinuz, the Arabs and Al-Fadga.

Generally speaking, the Nubians' houses overlook the Nile, with their dome-like ceilings. The basic unit in such a house is the courtyard on which all its rooms open.

It is very spacious, especially in the south where Al-kinuz live. However, in the north where the land is steep, houses are not spacious, they are one-storey buildings.

Significantly, building a new house concerns not only the builders, but the neighbourhood and the whole village as well.

It marks the beginning of forming a new family, which is a happy occasion for the whole village. Consequently, every villager deems it his duty to positively participate in

building this new house; some do the digging, others bring the stones or mud, and still other villagers take part in the building process itself. This is a wonderful example of the villagers' co-operation, solidarity and love.

The Nubian house begins with the guests' sitting room, which has a door of its own that directly opens on the street.

This house is furnished with a number of wooden benches, and some decorated palm-leaved plates and mats hung on the wall. Also, women hang some porcelain plates. At two corners of the house women place a clothesline for hanging laundry or sheets and covers .

Also, hanging from its ceiling are some "mashalib" (baskets made of plaited palm-leaves) for keeping food away from animals and insects. Besides this use, they also serve a decorative purpose, as they are decorated with coloured plaited strings, seashells and beads.

The other parts of the house are the living and bed rooms and the kitchen. There is also the bathroom.

For the newly wed couple the bedroom is called "hasirka" (in Al-kinouz area), and "hassil" (in Al-Fedga). Its furniture is made of palmleaves. The bed itself is made of plaited ropes or leather belts. There are also some wooden boxes and trunks decorated with geometrical units of flowers and Koranic verses. As for the walls themselves, they are decorated with palmleaved plates, mats and fans. Besides, amulets are hung there, too. People believe in the evil eye, optimism and pessimism. Such amulets take different shapes: a sundisc, a crescent, a bride, a fish, a scorpion or a triangle. They are made of leather or coloured cloth and decorated with seashells, beads or spangles. All these ornamental items are made by the Nubian women; they start very early on when they are but little girls.

Bedrooms are of two types: some for the married couples and others for the unmarried members. Still unmarried young ladies have their own separate rooms with separate doors called "bab elsir" (the secret door) by Al-kinouz and "nifadah" by the Arabs.

The Nubian house has one or more living rooms, with mats covering their floors. Also it has one or two storerooms for storing grains, seeds and crops; they are stored in "gaus" (mud silos). Women set up these silos and decorate them with engravings and plates.

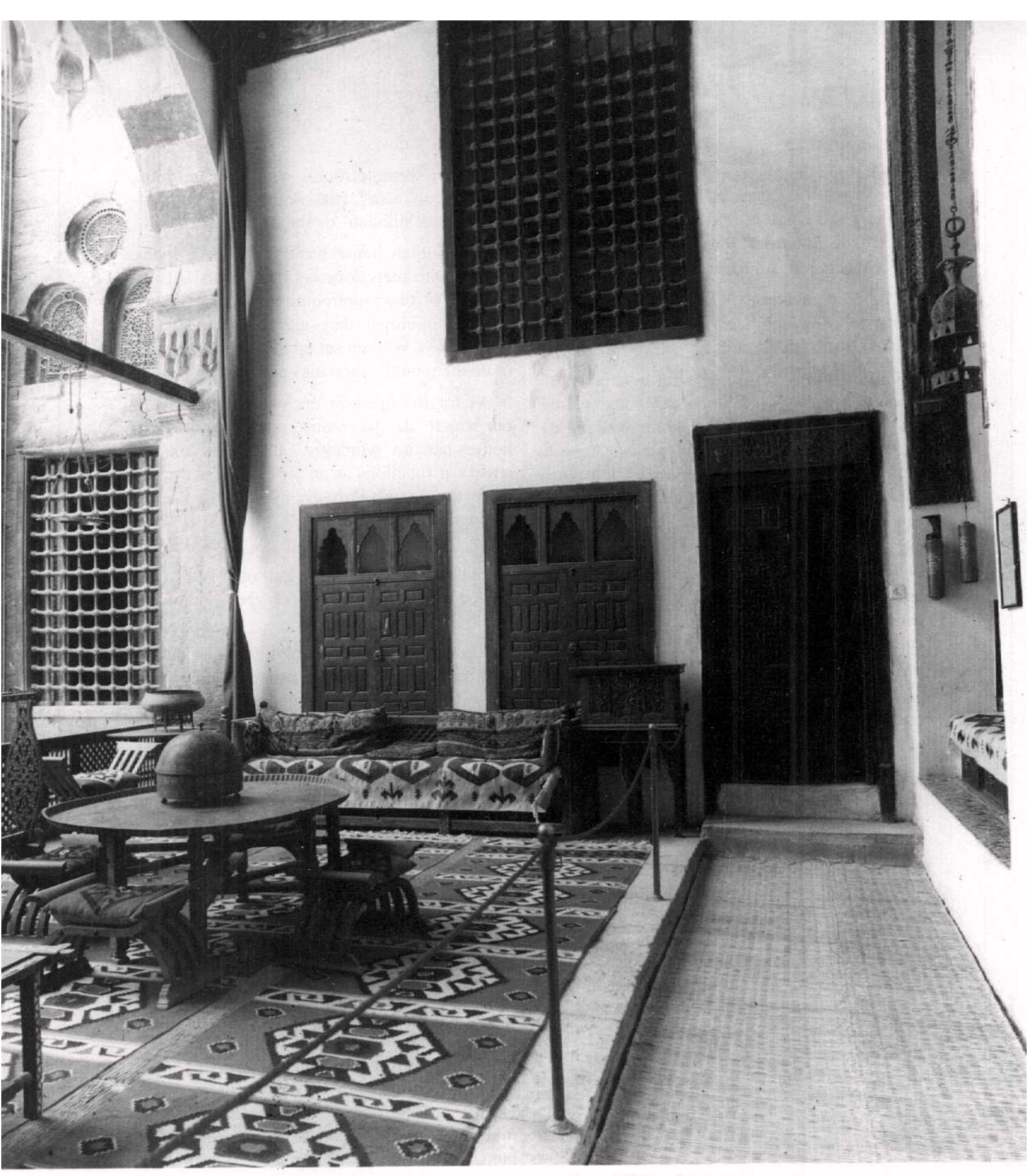
As for the open-air enclosure or courtyard on which all the rooms open (the Nubian house has no windows that open on the street), it functions as an air conditioner and a protector against intrusive eyes, as the late architect Hassan Fathi says.

Also, such internal courtyards can be partly turned into a sitting room. Part of it is also occupied by pottery containers ("zeir and kolah") for cooling drinking water.

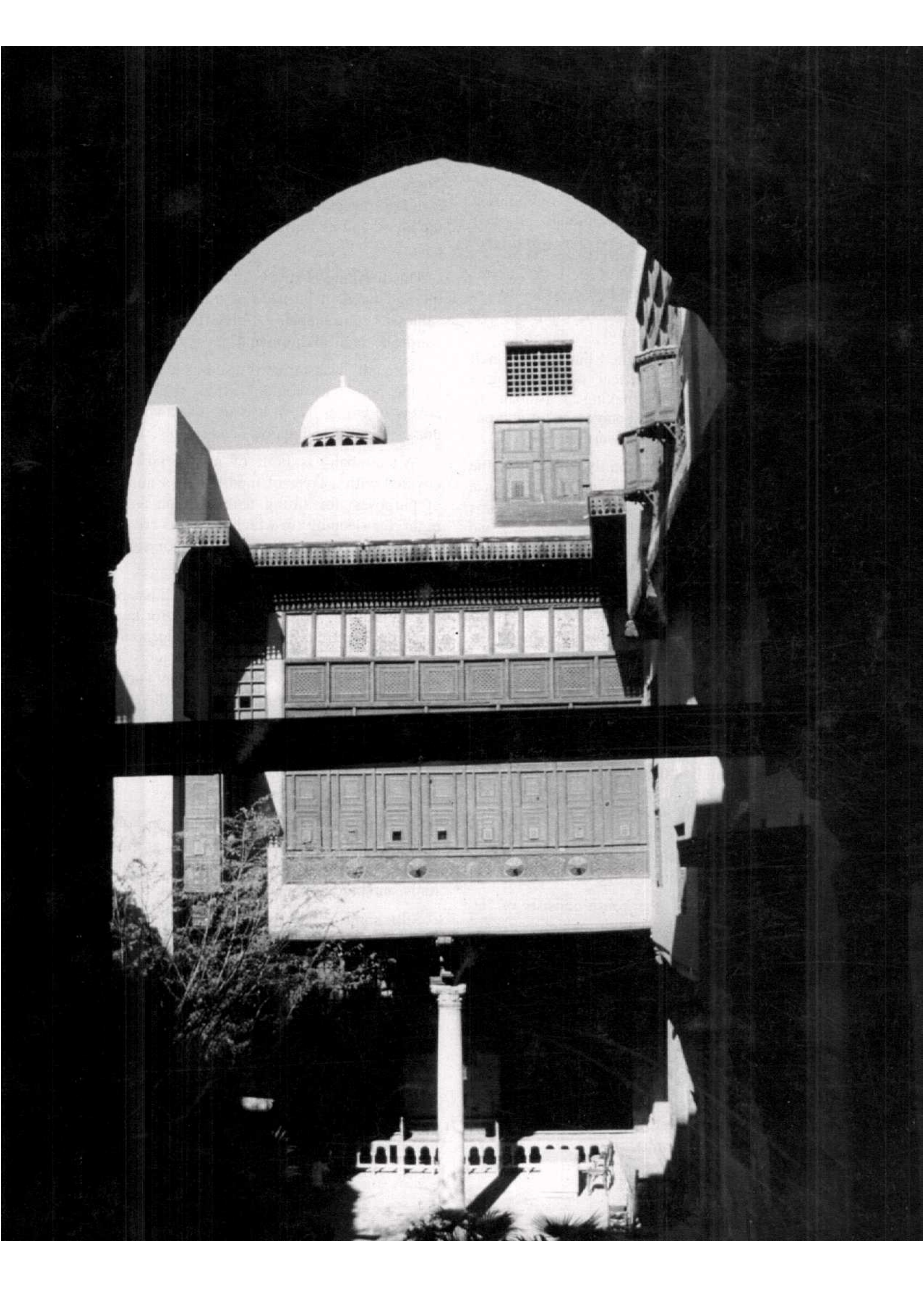
Also, in most houses the kitchen is in this enclosure: women set up a mud oven, where bread and meals are served fresh and hot. Also, there is a "kanoun" (like a cooker, but made of mud) for cooking these meals.

Most Nubian houses are painted white with lime from the outside. However the guests' sitting room is painted yellow and the bedrooms pink or rosy. In point of fact, Nubian women take special interest in decorating their houses. Thanks to the beautiful environment around them, they have developed their esthetic sense.

Many are the elements of beauty with which nature abounds: the lovely Nile with its wonderful fish, the plants and flowers on its banks, the glittering moon and stars at night, the palm trees, and the like. Such beautiful natural elements inspired the people to create certain symbols: the circle (a symbol of the sun) and the stars and the palm trees (a symbol of supremacy and sublimity). Also they have used certain abstract shapes of plants, flowers and birds, and amulets shaped like the fish (a symbol of good and blessing) or the scorpion or the crocodile (as a mimic means of warding



Asample of furniture, from the exhibits of
Gair Anderson 's Museum. This includes mats ,
kelims, and wardrobes inside the walls



off their danger and evil). They also drew the heads of oxen or rams or hang mummified fish, crocodiles and other animals on their doors so as to drive away evil spirits or protect them against the evil eye.

Therefore, the Nubian house looks like a lovely artistic painting. Also, it partakes of some pharaonic architectural

features such as the tilted buttresses which support the outside vertical wall, leaving a space that is used for making "mastabah" (a sort of platform) where people can sit and enjoy fresh air or winter sun warmth.

In Upper Egypt the family constitutes the nucleus of the agricultural socity, which is a stable society. People stick to their customs and mores, and the extended family, where we have three different generations living under the same roof, prevails. It all starts with marriage and then the nucleus family gets bigger and bigger until it becomes an extended family . Its members constitute an economic unity; they all work and support the family.

This village community is characterized by its simplicity, closeness of villagers, and their communion with nature around them .

Therefore, they use the available natural elements for building their houses; they use mud, straw, timber, and palmleaves. They make bricks by mixing mud with straw; the ceiling is made from palm leaves, and timber is used for making the windows and doors; it is also the source for manufacturing the furniture .

In Upper Egypt, the house consists of "almandarah" (the guests' room), which is always set apart from the others rooms, the internal courtyard, the living room, the bed room(s) and the baking room. In Assiut and Suhag governorates a two-storey building is called a palace, where the upper floor is for sleeping and the lower for living and household chores.

Traditionally, an Upper-Egyptian bride contributes very few furniture pieces in the nuptials home: a trinket, a pillow, a woolen mat and a bedcover (a quilt).

Then, as days pass by, she makes the missing furniture pieces all by herself . The shape of the house and its furniture are usually correlated.

This furniture is always of two types: movable and fixed. It is made of mud. It includes "alhassil", almastabah ", "alssaffah", the wall wardrobe, and "alkhorinaqat".

"Alhassil" was formerly used as a bedroom by the poor who couldn't afford the woolen covers in winter. Now, it is used as a shed for domestic animals like goats and rabbits.

"Almastabah" is built of mud bricks and covered with a layer of mud. It has a number of purposes: for sitting both at noon and at night, for sleeping (in which case it is covered with a mat and a linen) and also for storing household items and food stuff.

"Alssaffah" is a kind of cupboard. It has two big shelves; the upper shelf is used for keeping bread, and the lower for breeding poultry and rabbits. On its top household tools and utensils are kept. It is taken from the Turkish style which is made of marble. It is still kept in monumental houses in Egypt, such as Alsihimi's .

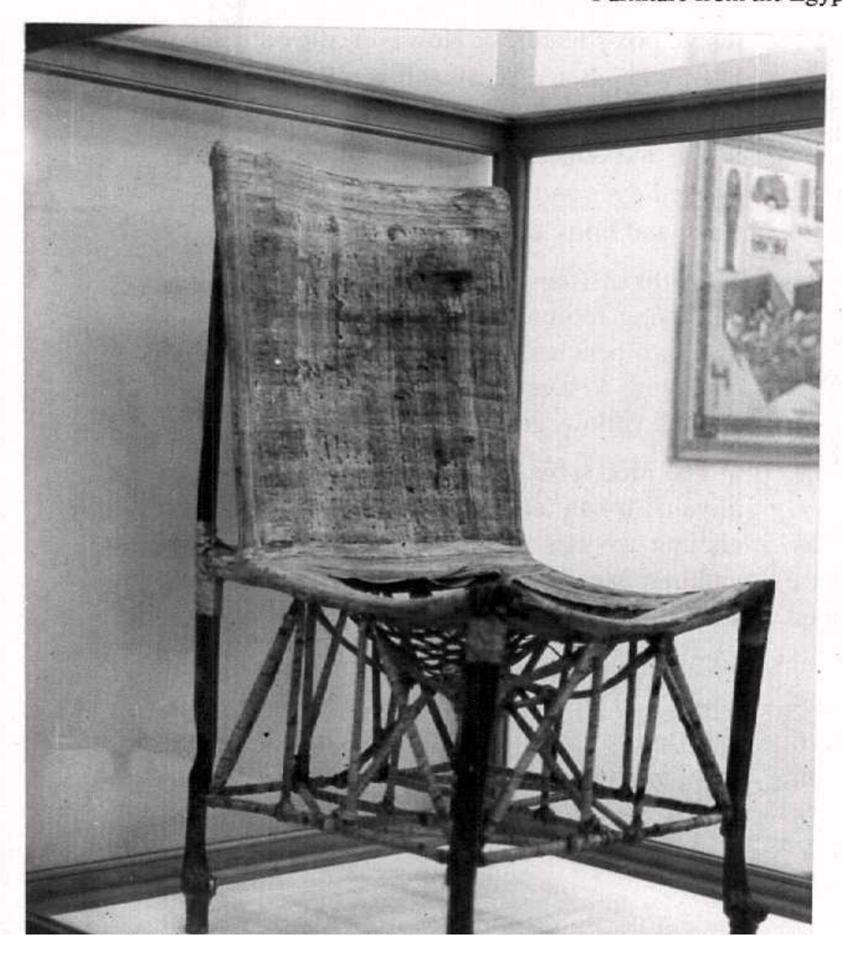
The wall wardrobe is made of wood and has a number of shelves for keeping clothes.

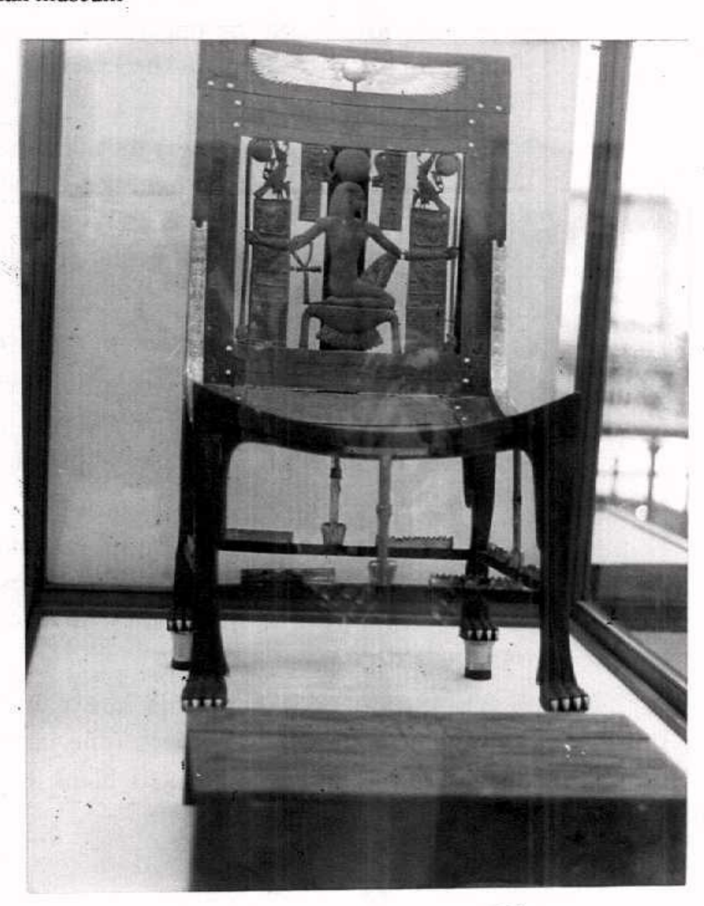
"Alkhorinqat" are deep wall niches or holes, square or rectangular in shape. They are used for placing lighting objects, keeping household tools, and breeding pigeons, and the like.

Still some other furniture pieces are the shelves"alarfuf", "aldwar" or the fixed silos, "almazyrah", "alforn" (the oven), "alkanoun althabit", "alhawayah", "alalakah", and "almathabit".

"Al-arfuf" (or the shelves) are made of mixed mud and straw, and are built on the walls. They are used for keeping cutlery and crockery. In Qinah Governorate, they are called"hardoub", and "sirdab" (cellar) in Suhag Governorate.

Furniture from the Egyptian museum





Fixed silos or"Aldwar" are built of mud inside the storage rooms. Cylindrical in shape, they are used for storing grains and seeds. Women in Upper Egypt excel in building such silos from mixed mud and straw. For storing, they are open at the top and then they are closed so as to protect the grains and seeds against mothworms . On top of these silos, women keep the household tools, and when this part is closed with a wooden door, it is used for keeping money and important documents, that is, it becomes a kind of safe.

"Almazyarah" is of mud and is used as a stand for" alzir" (a water container). In Suhag Governorate it is called "Siqayah".

"Alfurn" (the oven) is built in the courtyard or in the bakery room . It looks like a dome, with a circular piece of clay or thin iron at its centre. It has two holes: one underneath the iron / clay piece for fuel, and the other above it for placing bread or food pots. Also, it has a third small hole at the top for excluding smoke.

"Alkanoun" is built of mud, and it has two holes: the lower and the upper. The former is for feeding it with fuel and the latter for placing food pans .

The 'ventilator' is built next to "alkanoun". It is a kind of basin, big and high, and is used for drying table utensils by the heat of "alkanoun".

"Alalakah" is a palmleaf or plaited rope for hanging the laundry.

"Al-mathabit" are two thick palmleaves or two iron bars fixed in the wall, where blankets and other bed covers are placed folded.

Also, furniture can be made of palmleaves, wood, iron or copper.

Many a family use furniture pieces (such as beds, chairs and tables) made of palmleaves . Others buy metal furniture; they have copper or iron beds.

These iron beds have different names according to their different sizes (one inch, two inches, etc.) They are painted black or light blue and are decorated with a lot of copper ornaments. The thicker and bigger the bed, the higher is its price.

A bed has four posts: two at the front and two at the back . These posts are joined together by iron bars. Boards made of thick wood are placed on the lower part of the posts and are called "mulah". They are placed between two thick wood pieces called" alarditin".

This bed is decorated with copper adornments. It is covered with cotton mattresses, sheets, blankets and pillows. Also, some people cover their beds with a mosquito net called "namosiah".

As for wooden furniture, it is made of comphor, willow, "almousky" or"alkazorina".

The following are some of the very popular furniture pieces used in these areas.

The case or box is one such very popular piece. It is used for keeping clothes and beautification items, and the like. It is made of comphor or"alkazorina" wood.

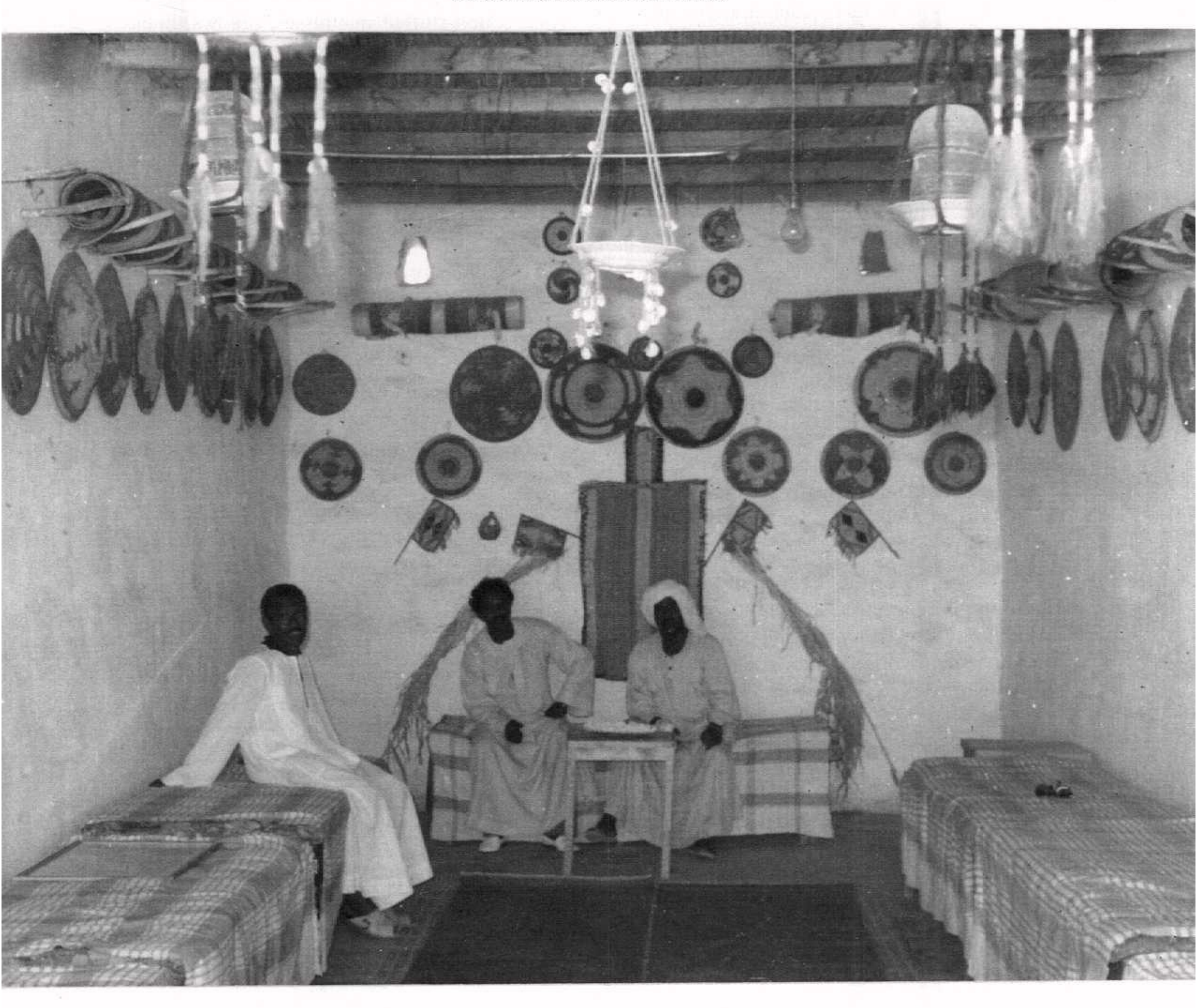
Such boxes still maintain some of the Pharaonic box's features . However, they are decorated with ebony, ivory and precious stones. A bride's case is lined with paper from both its inside and outside, and is decorated with rosy and red dyes and geometrical lines and units in floral and birds shapes.

"Aldikah"(the bench) is used in the sitting and living rooms. In bedrooms, it is used as a bed; two benches are placed together and covered with a sheet and a cotton pillow . It is painted yellow, green or light blue.

The food table in Upper-Egypt is called "tabliyah". It has four conical wooden legs and a circular wooden disc. It is 30 cm. high. Also, children use it as a desk for studying their lessons.

The table is made of wood, and is used for a number of purposes. People use it for eating, studying, or placing food utensils or cookers . It is painted green, yellow or light blue. If part

Decorations From a Nubiam house



of a bride's trousseau, it is painted pink, red or yellow in the shape of wood contours.

The (Istanbuli) sofa, as the English Orientalist Edward Lane states, is a circular wooden sofa, with an upper part-cum-back. It

also has a lower part-cum store, where linens and clothes are

kept.

"Alboureh" could be a variation on the word "bureau", as it includes four drawers, placed vertically above each other, sometimes with a mirror on top of it . It is painted yellow or brown. It is used for keeping clothes and woman's make-up items.

People also use wooden wardrobes for keeping clothes. They may have one or two compartments, with some drawers at the bottom. They may also have a mirror fixed on the inside or outside of its door(s). They are of two types: the Arabic (decorated) and the American (undecorated).

Like in Upper Egypt, the house in Lower Egypt has almost the same architectural units. What differentiates the latter is that it has an extra winter room on the ground floor . A room-wide, mud oven is built in this room, on top of which people sleep after they warm up the place via the oven or "alforn" as it is called by peasant people.

However, in Lower Egypt the house units and furniture pieces are given different names. Also the stuff used for making complementary furniture items differs. For instance, they use dried reed (stalks) for making baskets, poultry cages, and the like.

Popular Houses in Big Cities:

In Cairo Governorate, the lower classes furnish their homes in proportion to the number of rooms they occupy. In a bedroom, for example, they place black iron beds with pillars.

These beds are given names according to the thickness of their posts or pillars. Also, they are painted blue, light brown or green (pistachio) and are decorated with certain copper adornments.

As for the better-off families, they use copper beds, with square-based posts that are joined with decorated copper bars; such beds are adorned with copper ornaments, circular mirrors or statues shaped like angels.

Whether of copper or iron, the beds are banded with embroidered cloth or at the top lace. On the wooden "mullah" (spring mattress) cotton-stuffed mattresses, pillows, linen and sheets are placed. Also, some people use "alnamosiyah" (mosqito net) to protect sleepers against mosqitoes or flies.

Nowadays, most Cairene homes use wooden beds, with almost no decorative ornaments.

For keeping their clothes, people use wardrobes of different types.

Also, they use sofas covered with cotton-stuffed mattresses together with some pillows.

These sofas are used for sitting. People also use bamboo chairs in their sitting rooms .

For having their meals, they use a low wooden table called "tabliyah".

Also, some people cover the floor with mats; others use carpets made of light wool or cotton.

In Al-Wadi Al-Gadid (The New Valley) Governorate, houses were built on top of hills so as to be safe against the barbarian tribes' inroads from the west and the Sudanese Dervishes from the south . Hence, they fenced their villages and had to lock them by night to protect their fortunes and resources. Accordingly, these places looked like highly fenced fortresses.

The Architectural Elements of Buildings and their Internal Designs in the New Valley:

Most buildings here used to consist of one storey only. However, with the increase of the population they have become three-or four-storey buildings. Such buildings differ according to their owners' financial standards.

Inside The room From Aswan



Popuar chair From the palm tree

The first thing that meets one's eyes in these houses, is "almastabah", (sort of a platform or dais). It is here that people can rest before they enter. Right at the door of the house, a clay container filled with drinking water (called "alawah") is hung .

The outside or front gate is huge and decorated with big nails, and it has a broad threshold (originally a sant tree trunk) with some Kor'anic verses written on it for blessings.

Also, when a family member is back from his/ her pilgrimage in the holy lands in Saudi Arabia, some more Kor'anic verses and sayings by the Prophet are written on the front walls of the house, also the two holy mosques in Mecca (al-mukarrama) and Medina (al-munawara) are painted on these walls, together with the vehicles used in their travel- be they camels, ships or planes. Nowadays people hardly do such rites and rituals .

Other people stick ceramic plates on the outside walls of their houses as an emblem of their generosity. Such practices and beliefs were inherited from their pharaonic ancestors.

A New Valley house is internally divided into two parts. The first includes the entrance, a reception room, a roofed hall and stores . Part two consists of the internal courtyard, bed and living rooms, kitchen, and toilet. Hedges are also attached to this part.

The reception room ("almandarah") is used for hosting guests and entertaining them. Its floor is covered with mats or woolen rugs. It also has some furniture pieces such as sofas, chairs and tables .

The roofed room ("alsaqifah"), with no window, is used as a living room, where the family members get together to talk and eat. It is also used for receiving guests. Its floor is covered with mats or cotton blankets called "klims". It leads into the rest of the building.

"Alriwaq" (the porch), a big hall on the upper floor, is used as a bedroom for guests. It has only three walls, as the fourth serves as its door. It is also used as a reception hall for visitors. Hence, it has its separate stairs. People use woolen blankets and cotton covers when they sleep in it.

"Almaglis" is a living room, which is covered with mats or woolen kilims/ rugs. The people eat on a low wooden table called "altabliyah".

Bedrooms are on the upper storey and they open onto "almaglis". A bedroom is allocated to the head of the family and his wife. Bedrooms are not big and are covered with embroidered mats and rugs. Metal or wooden beds are used. For keeping clothes and linen, metal or wooden boxes are used . Also, a dried palmleaf (called "aisah") is used for hanging clothes.

A lamp called "alsirag" was used for lighting bedrooms; it was a clay container filled with oil . It had a cloth filament which lighted when soaked in the oil. Then kerosene lamps and lanterns were used for this purpose.

Today, electric lamps are used everywhere in the New Valley.

The kitchen's roof is built of 'sant' or palm tree trunks and is then covered with palm-leaves, with holes for ventilation. Hence, it is called "altashria".

Outside the kitchen is placed a stand for "alkolal" (which are clay conical containers for cooling drinking water).

The internal courtyard, called "alwasaia", is a distinctive feature of houses here. It includes "alforn" (mud oven), "alrahayah" (grinder) and mortar.

The sheds are for keeping cows and birds; they open onto the internal courtyard so as women can easily get inside them without having to go outside. The rest of sheep and cattle are usually kept in sheds nearby the farms.

"Almalqah" is sort of a roof garden; it is also called "tormah". It is fenced with palm-leaves that are plaited together with ropes and it is then covered with two layers of mud.

In Siwa Oasis, houses are built of palm trees' trunks and reed. Also sand or lime stones are used for building buttresses and pillars.

Here, the house is an uncovered square or rectangle courtyard, with the rooms surrounding it from all sides; this makes the house well lighted and ventilated. It is often a two-storey building .

It is divided into two main parts : one for reception, and the other for living and bedrooms. Also it has two entrances: one for males and the other for females.

As for the reception ("almaglis"), it is a big room for receiving visitors. It holds a lot of sofas and is covered with rugs and "kilims". Attached to it is a dining room, the floor of which is one step higher than that of 'almaglis'.

The house includes a lot of bed and living rooms, which are covered with woolen mats and rugs. People use metal or wooden beds. Also sofas are placed in both types of rooms, where people sit or sleep. Women also make a number of "maragin" for keeping foods and their own items. Also circular mats embroidered with coloured woolen strings and seashell buttons are hung on their walls for both practical and decorative purposes.

The internal courtyard is used for almost all domestic activities. In it there is a well, an olive tree, an oven, a toilet and a sink. Also, a kitchen is built in the courtyard.

The roof of the building is fenced and used for sleeping in summer. Just like in the New Valley, the houses in Siwa Oasis are electrically lighted.

As for Sinai Bedounis, they live in woolen tents called "Biyout Alshaar"; they are made by women. For a big tent, nine pillars are set up, with three for each of its two sides and the other three in the middle. It has two sections: one for women and the other for men. In summer, they use tents made of sackcloth. The floor of these tents is covered with woolen cloth made by women, mats and rugs. Women hardly attend men's gatherings . They use woolen covers called "algafur", which are dyed red or green. Also, these covers are folded and used as pillows.

The Bedouins use "alraheyah" for grinding cereals and seeds, which they sift and prepare for baking and cooking. They use copper pans for cooking their food. For roasting lamb meat, they build a little cottage called "zariyah" with a hole for the fuel. After slaughtering and skinning the lamb or sheep they wash out its inside and bury it in live coal, and is left until it is well grilled, and then served.

For their meals, they use wooden plates, which are of two types: the small ones called "batiyah" and the big "mansaf".

The Bedouins are fond of coffee, which explains why each family has a coffee set. It includes "almahmassah" for broiling the coffee seeds and cardamom, and the mortar for grinding them. Then, coffee is made in a big copper jar called "bakrag" and is poured in little cups, and then served on a tray.

From goat skin they make their drinking water containers called "kirab".

POPULAR COSTUMES

BY Widad Hamid



By popular costumes we mean the traditional patterns of clothes inherited from previous generations throughout Egypt. Such patterns reflect the typical popular concepts, beliefs, styles of life and the nature of environment and production in Egypt. In other words, they are what they are because they are the natural product of this type of society.

Geographically, Egypt is divided into two main parts: Lower Egypt (or the Nile Valley) and Upper Egypt. Significantly, Cairo-the capital-lies at a point where the two parts meet. Besides, its location is also at the meeting area of the Eastern and Western deserts. That it has always been located in this area (the Pharaonic Manph, Heliopolis, Babylon, the Arab Al-Fustat, Al-Askar and Al-qatai) is enough proof of the crucial importance of its central location.

As the geographical position of Egypt is not the focus of this chapter, we tend to divide Egypt into cultural regions, according to the distinctive features of the popular costumes of each region. We have, therefore, eight areas:

1- Cairo and the big cities.

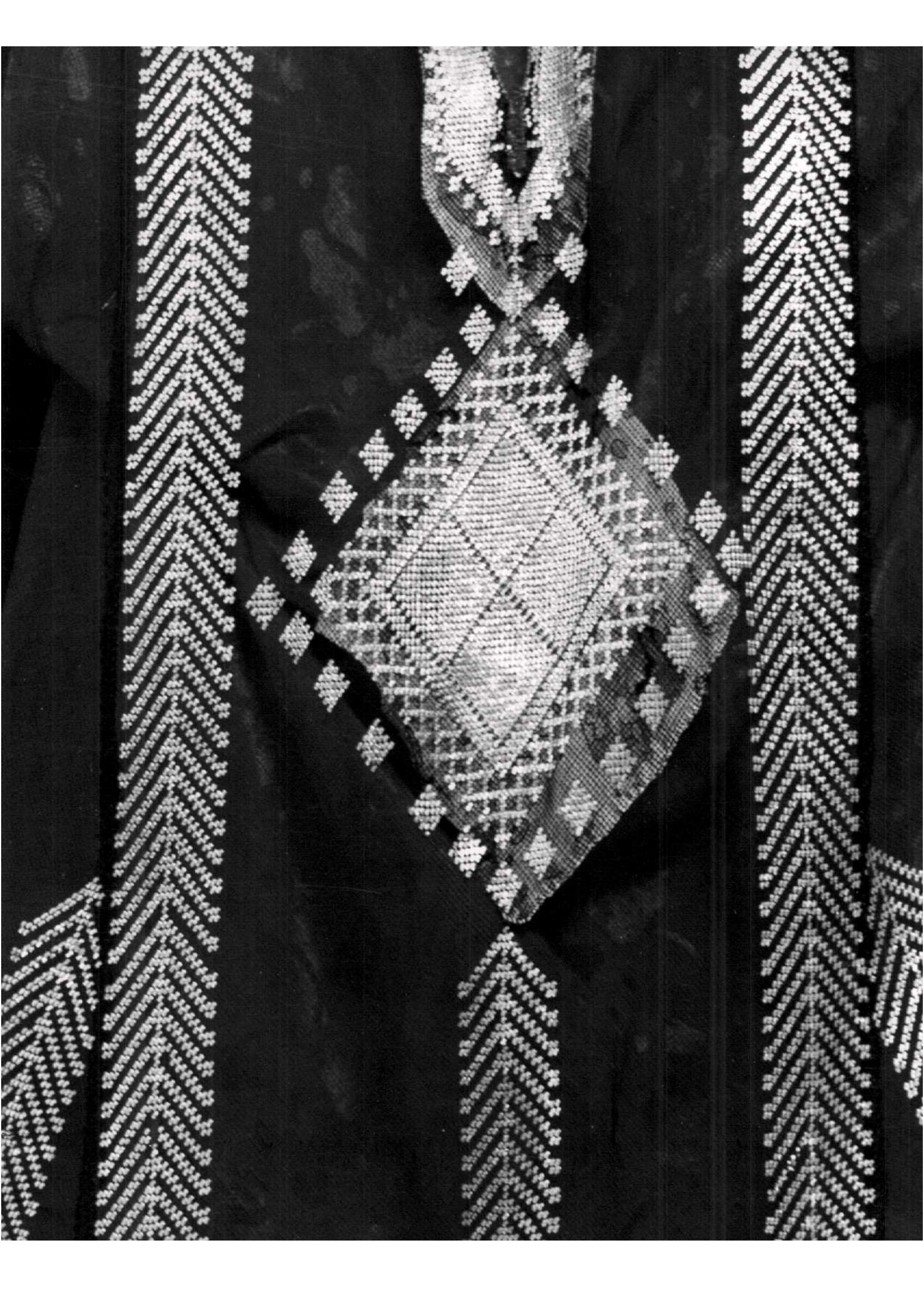
2- Lower Egypt

3- Upper Egypt

4- Areas at the coasts of the Mediterranean and Delta lakes.

5- The Western Desert Area, which is subdivided into :

a- The West North Coast in the North.



b- The Western Desert Oases in the South, which include: the Lower Oases, Siwa Oasis, Alfarafra Oasis, and Al-Dakhla and Al-Kharga Oases.

6- The Eastern Desert Area, which is subdivided into: Al-Ababida region in the north and Al-Basharia in the south.

7- The Nubian Area, which includes: Al-Kinuz, Al-Arab, and Al-Fadga.

8- Sinai: North Sinai and South Sinai

Naturally, clothes differ from one area to another, due to the environment, the weather and people's traditions, customs, rituals, and habits. This accounts for the big variety in popular clothes. Hence the above cultural divisions.

The following are some of the features which clothes have in common, regardless of the above mentioned differences:

1- There is a direct correlation between the continuity of the authentic and inherited features of clothes in one area and its isolation from other areas. The more isolated the area is the more authentie its costumes are.

2- There is a relation of mutual influence between what is inherited and authentic in a dress and what is imported and unauthentic in it. This feature best applies to the peripheral areas of Egypt: Nubia, Sinai and the West North Coast area .

3- Popular costumes have a semiotic function, that is, they are viewed as "signs" designating certain meanings or significations. In Sinai, for example, a virgin young lady embroiders her dresses with blue rims, unlike a married woman who uses the red colour to indicate her marital status. Also the veil women wear differs from one tribe to another.

In Nubia men wear embroidered coloured "tawaki" (skullcaps), whereas in Al-Fadga they wear a big turban, made of white light cotton cloth. Many "Sufis" (religious men) use green turbans. Also, in Siwa Oasis, a woman wears a black dress on the first day of her wedding, which she replaces by a white one on the third day.

4- Although each area has its distinct cultural signs and symbols, they all have in common the use of bright colours as a token of happiness, and the black as the sign of sadness and mourning. Also, they all use white for wedding dresses, pilgrimage clothes, and coffin cloth.

5- Popular costumes may undergo certain design or stuff changes. However, this is all done within certain limits, so as their authentic character is maintained. For example, some synthetic fibres are introduced and costumes are changed accordingly; both the design and the shape of the dress are modified so as to suit the synthetic stuff. Yet, the overall shape of such dresses is not changed.

6- As a means of creating an alternative feeling of happiness, the bedouin women use a lot of decorative coloured embroidery in their otherwise grim clothes.

Now we turn to the different cultural regions and their distinctive costumes.

1 . Cairo:

Just like a lot of capitals all over the world, Cairo has become the home of lots of imported European clothes. However, being the capital city, it is the market for all locally produced clothes. Only in popular districts in Cairo can you find popular costumes.

The above is also true, in variable degrees, of other big cities like Alexandria.

In Cairene popular districts, men wear big "galabiyas", woolen or cotton caps, turbans and silk or woolen scarfs. This is called "galabia baladi" (a popular garment).

Unlike it, some men wear "galabia afrangi "(an upper-midle class garment) made of plain or striped cotton, with a collar or half-collar and sleeves ending with cuffs. In winter, they wear coats over these "galabiyas" . Only few people, especially old people, still wear the fez "altarboush".

A decorative unit embroidered with (talli) (a kind of embroidery with silver or golden wires) on tulle cloth from Assiut .

Al-Azhar people wear "Jubbah" and "Caftan", and turban and shawl.

Also, craftsmen used to wear distinctive costumes. This was in vogue till the turn of the century. Carpenters, for example, wore a big "sirwal" (a garment) made of "dammur" (a coarse calico-like fabric) with a long-sleeved shirt. They also wore a cloth or leather bag in which they carried their tools.

They also wrapped their heads with caps and turbans. On their feet they wore "almarkoub" and "almadas" or "albulgha" (kinds of shoes). The poor used to wear "alkabakib" (which are like slippers but made of wood) at home or in the mosques for ablutions before prayer.

As for the middle class and the gentry, they wore "galabiya" (made of wool or cotton) and "abaya" (a cloak) especially in winter. Above the head, they wore "lebdah" or "altarboush" (a fez) or a turban. Around the neck, they put woolen scarfs or shawls. In summer, all clothes were made of cotton or silk.

Well-off popular men wear a pair of shoes called "Kundurah" or "banse".

Ever since the nineteen twenties (1920s) many men have started to wear clothes imported from Europe.

Women's wear:

Women in the popular districts (in Cairo) wear various types of clothes. However, "almilaya" is the most dominant of these pieces.

Till the mid nineteenth century, women used to wear a black, thick 'milaya' called "habara" for outdoors activities.

Unlike married women's black "habara", virgin young ladies wore white "milaya". Women also wore 'niqab" to cover their heads and faces (only their eyes are exposed). Significantly, the way women wear 'almilaya" differs according to their age and marital status. An aged woman for instance, wraps herself with "milaya" revealing no part of her body. As for a young lady, she would wear "milaya" in such a way as to expose her head and part of her shoulders and chest.

They also wear a white face cover (veil) called "burqu" or "tarha" or "bisha".

The Cairene "milaya" is one or two pieces of bright black crepe, sewn up and forming one big rectangular piece that covers a woman from head to foot. In popular regions, "milaya" is called" daloua".

Also, women wear "milaya" made of black silk called "malass" in Alexandria, Mansoura, Damietta, Suez and Port-Said.

For their underwear women wear cotton pieces: slips, bras, panties, panty hoses, and the like.

Also, women cover their heads (hair) with "mendil be oyah" (a head kerchief). In Alexandria this kerchief is called "midawarah", which is made of silk and is triangular in shape, with its three edges embroidered with decorative beads, spangles or woolen pieces.

They also wear high-or low-heeled shoes, and slippers called "kataniila" in popular regions.

2. The Delta:

This area is enclosed between the two Nile branches: Damietta (east) and Rashid (west).

It includes Al-Kaliobia, Al-Menoufia, Al-Dakahlia, Kafr El-Sheikh, Al-Bouhira and Al-Sharqiya governorates.

Our talk is restricted here to the description of the clothes of the peasants in this area; fishermen and bedouins costumes are excluded.

Men's wear:

Peasants' clothes are very simple; they wear "algalabiya". For their underclothes, they wear underpants (trousers) and waistbands (that is, the waist is fastened with a band called "tikkah"). They also wear large long - sleeved shirts, with a circular neck-hole, or a long sleeved flannel undershirt .

Men wear a headdress called "lasah" or "libdah" or a turban on their heads. During work, they wear a hand-made cotton or wool "takiya" (a cap), wrapped with square striped kerchief called "almandil almahalawy".

For his feet, the peasant wears a pair of shoes called "bulghah", which covers only the front part of his foot.

Women's wear:

A peasant woman wears light-coloured panties and a long unsleeved shirt for her underclothes.

When in the field or at home, she wears a long-sleeved cotton "galabiya" with bright colours; in Delta it is called "alkashf" dress. It may end with a cornice. It is tight at the chest and large at the waist, with some decorative folds.

For outdoors, she wears a soft bright velvet or cotton dress, with its front part (the chest) embroidered with coloured beads and bright threads, or decorated with bright satin or silk bands.

A peasant young woman covers her hair with a triangular kerchief called "mandeil be oyah"; it is also called" kamtah", 'hardah" and "midawarah". Women also wear velvet or silk coloured shawls.

As for peasant women from Al-Sharkia Governorate, they have a distinct costume. Instead of the black velvet dress, they wear "galabiyas" made of cloth called "almalass", with long, large sleeves, and cover their heads with a black veil called "tarhah", which extends to cover the neck and chest.

On their feet they wear slippers, which resemble men's "bulghah".

3. Upper Egypt (AlSaid)

This area extends from South Giza until South Aswan; it includes the governorates of Bani Sweif, Al-Fayum, Al-Minia, Assiut, Suhag, Qina and Aswan.

Although the clothes of this area have a lot of features in common, they still have certain distinctions, especially women's dresses.

Men's wear:

For their underwear the Upper Egyptians wear long underpants fastened around the waist with a band called "tikkah", and large undershirts, which cover the knees. Their outer garments consist of "galabiyas" and waistcoats.

When not working, they wear woolen "galabiyas" and a coat called " abaya" (a cloak). Around their necks, they wrap a woolen scarf called "talfiha" or a silk shawl called "lasah", and on their heads they put a headdress called "libdah" and a turban. This "libdah" is made of wool or camel hair ("wabar"). The Upper Egyptian wraps it around his head in three or four folds; sometimes he wears it like a dome on his head.

The poor Upper Egyptians used to wear an outer garment called "zaabout". It was handmade of brown wool, and it was rectangular, with long sleeves and a triangular neck hole. Now, they wear "abaya" (a cloak).

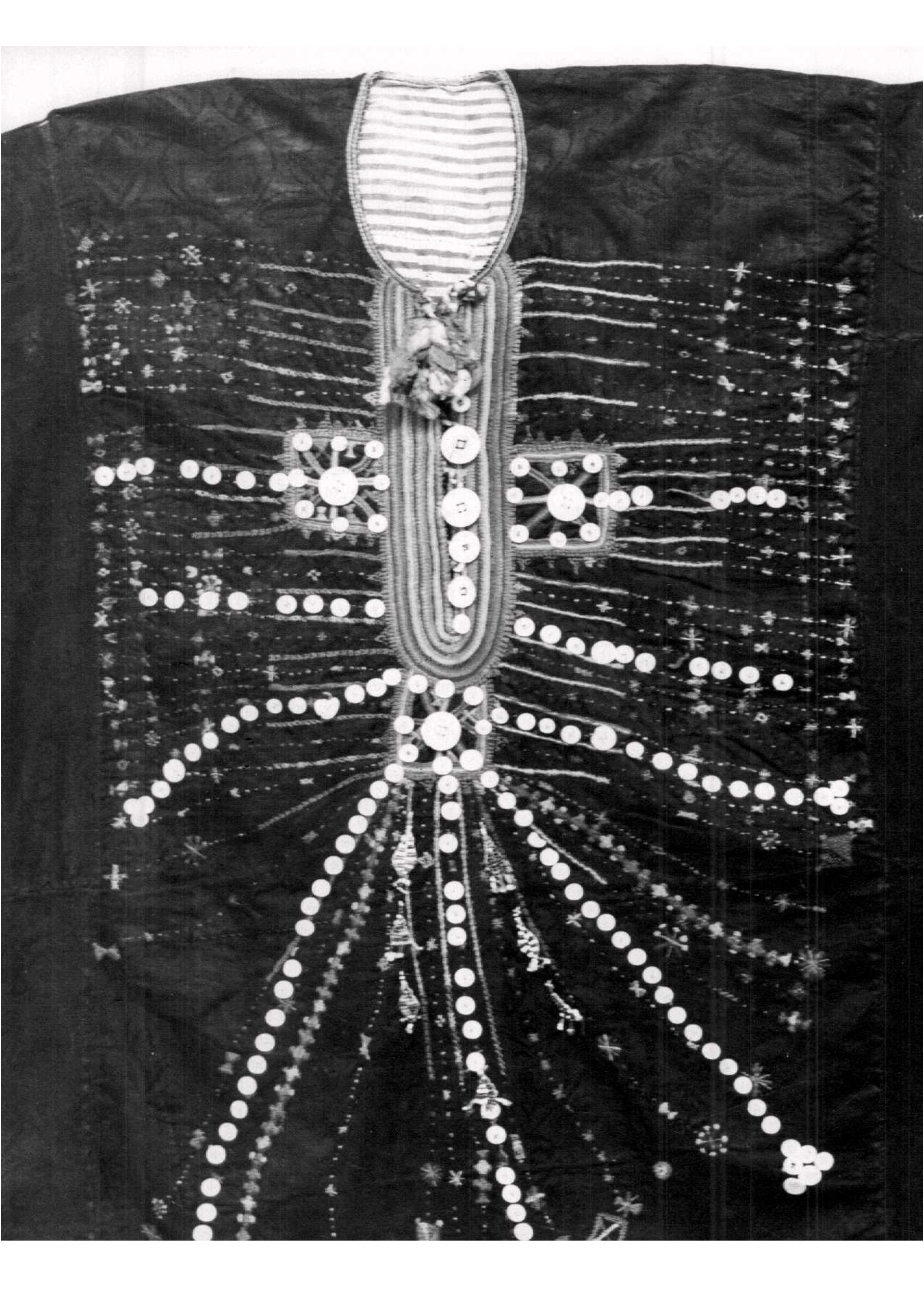
The Upper Egyptians are characterized by their big turbans and the sticks they hold, which they consider as complementary to their costumes and characters. Sticks differ according to age and occasion. The thick stick is called "alshouma".

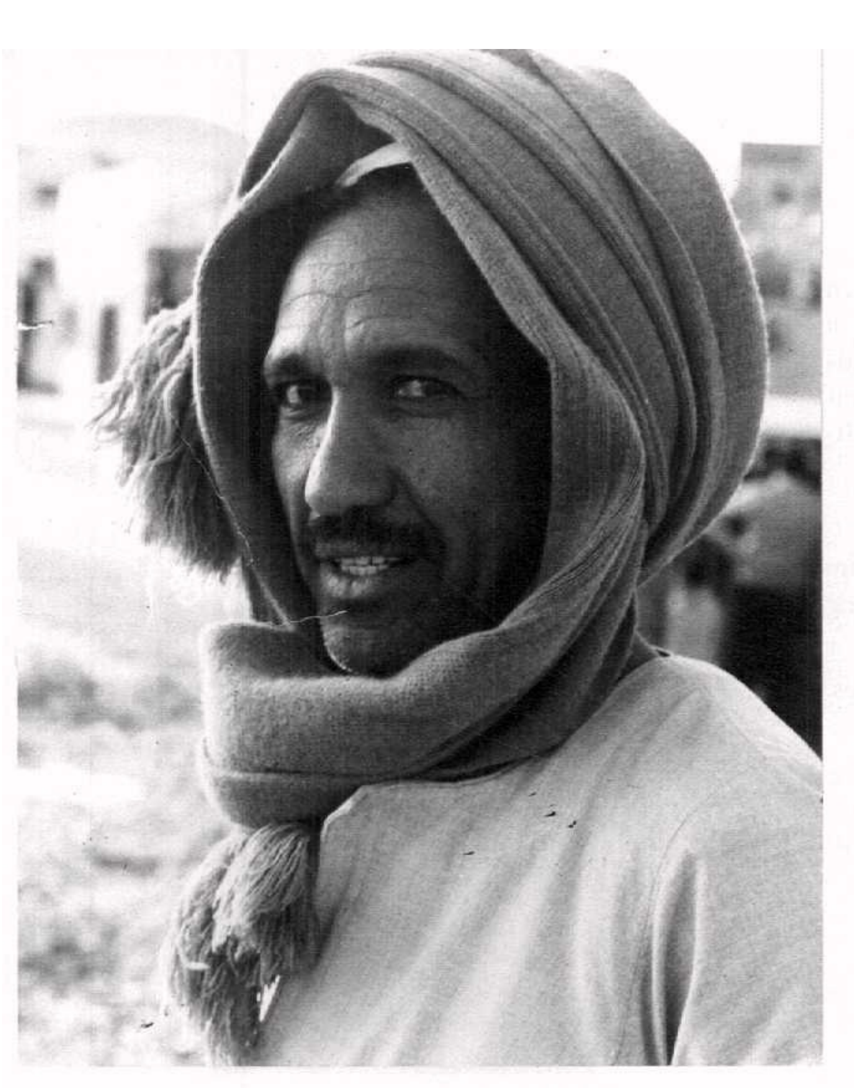
The shoes they wear are called "albulagh". Formerly, they used to wear thin-leathered shoes called "malkhah".

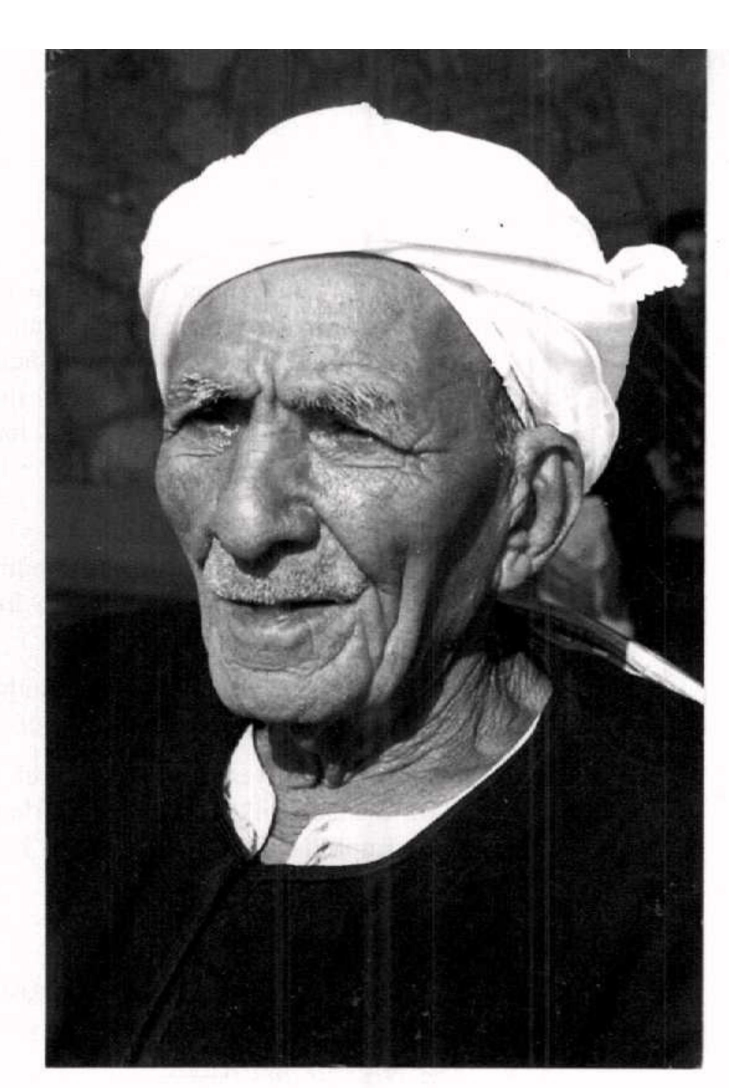
Women's wear:

Women in Upper Egypt wear long panties and undershirts made of light cotton cloth. As for their indoors clothes, they wear "galabiyas", with long sleeves and bordered at the shoulders and tight at the waist. They are long enough to cover the knees and half the legs.

Women's outdoors clothes consist of two







The (koftan) and the (turban). Fishermen's costumes during their leisure times

parts: the outer garment and "alabaya". The latter is a black dress worn over the domestic "galabiya". In Isna, they call it "Koftan" and "Gebba" in Luxor. It is rectangular in shape, open along the left side and with no sleeves. It has a wide round neckhole which reaches half the chest.

Such clothes are decoratively embroidered with silver or golden wires. As for the outer garment, it covers a woman's body all over.

There are vairous types of this outer garment. In Fayoum, for instance, women wear 'almilayah allaf' or "almalass", which is rectangular in shape and made of silk. Also, in Bany Swiif and Al-Minya, women wear "almalass" together with the semicircular "shuggha". In Suhag, Assiut and Gina, they wear the hand - made black woolen "burdah" and "alhabra" which is made of silk or cotton. The elderly women wear 'alhabra' which ends with violetish borders; recently-married women wear red-bordered pieces. The dignitaries' women wear grey "milayas" with blue squares.

Also, women wear bright cotton satin "milayas", with drawn crescents called "abuhilal".

They also wear thick black stockings that make up for shortness of clothes, and they wear simple shoes that expose their ankles.

4. The Mediteranean and Delta Lakes Area:

Men's Wear:

In this area fishermen wear distinctive costumes. They wear wide, black cotton pants, with two big pockets called "sayhalatan", and wrap a belt-like cotton "dikah". They also wear black or blue long-sleeved, high collar shirts and light coloured vests.

At work, they use a headdress which is made of white cloth. Alternatively, they wear white turbans or scarfs.

At leisure times, they wear "koftan", which is a long 'galabiya' with long sleeves and a half-collar neckhole. They cover their heads with white turbans or shawls. As for their shoes, they wear "alkandara", which is a half-boot with somewhat high heels.

Women's wear:

Women wear black "milayas" and medium long dresses, tight at the waist and with long sleeves.

Aged women wear dark coloured clothes, whereas young women prefer bright colours.

They wear a headcover called "mandil be oyah", with a black silk veil called "tarhah". They wear simple leather shoes without heels or with heels and bangles.



Headcover for a woman from the West North Coast

5. The Western Desert:

This area embraces two sections: the Coast in the North and the Oases in the South.

1. The West North Coast:

In includes Al-Amrya in the east, King Maryut, Burg El-Arab, Bihig, Al-Hamam, Al-Alamin, Sidi Barani, Marsa Matrouh and Al-Saloum in the west.

Many bedouin tribes live in this area. They have in common their beliefs and costumes.

Men's wear:

In the West North Coast men wear pants and cotton shirts (in winter, they wear woolen shirts). They also wear white "galabiyas" called "Koftan", with vests or "sadria".

On special occasions, they wear a very long woolen garment called "jarid"; it is mostly worn by aged men. For the head, they wear crimson red fez called "shinna" imported from Libya.

Young men wear "abayah" and a square white cotton head cover called "sumadah". The shoes they wear are called "bulghah" that are made of yellow overturned leather.

Women's wear:

Women here wear a bright plain or multi-coloured cloth dress, with long sleeves, which they call "koftan". Around the waist, they wear a broad red or scarlet woolen belt, or a square scarf. They wear shoes called "bulghah gatta-shi". Aged women wear black cotton dresses and the long traditional red belts which amount to three metres long.

Young women cover their heads with coloured scarfs, which they replace with balck veils when they get married. Also, women may wear a square black silk headcover called "os-bah", with lots of colours at its edges, and knotted at the back of the head.

2- The Oases:

These are Siwa, El-Kharga and El-Dakhla, El-farafra, and the Lower Oases.

A. The lower Oases:

Administratively, they are part of Giza Governorate. Its inhabitants are farmers. They are the closest to the Nile Valley. Hence the variety of costumes these people wear.

Men's wear:

They wear the clothes worn by all the Nile Valley inhabitants; the only difference lies in the white colour of their clothes and headcovers.

Women's Wear:

The above is again true of women's clothes. Both groups wear the same clothes at home. They differ only in their outdoors clothes.

In the Lower Oases, women wear a long dress made of black cotton and decorated with coloured geometrical embroidered units. This dress takes its name from the name of such ornamental units: "almatwar", "alariga" and "alduhrig". Also, it can be decorated with some silver or golden coins.

Women may prefer to wear black velvet dresses, with some embroideries, and silk or velvet belts - cum - head covers. For here women do not wear head kerchiefs or covers. Instead, they wear light black cotton or silk veils, two metres long and bordered with fine scarlet wool called "alhubkah" .

B. Siwa Oasis

Administratively, Siwa Oasis follows Marsa Matrouh Governorate. Originally, its people descended from the Berbers in West Africa. They have their distinctive costumes.

Men's wear:

Men in this area wear a white cotton shirt which reaches under the knee, with long sleeves and it is open at its both sides. With this shirt, they wear long white pants that reach a little above the feet. In winter, they wear an outer garment called "aljibah", hand-made of raw wool and with no sleeves. It has a square neckhole.

Some men wear a simple white "taqiya" as a headdress, while others wear "alshinna" .

Women's wear:

In Siwa, women wear white cotton pants, fastened round the waist with a belt called "ti-kah" that is embroidered with coloured threads.

Also, they wear a dress which reaches a litle under their knees. This dress is always in bright colours and rectangular in shape. They cover their heads with black, plain silk veils or veils embroidered with coloured threads and mother-of-pearl buttons. They may also wear bright cotton shawls. When they go outdoors, they wear grey "milaya", with black and blue little squares.

The Wedding Dress:

It is distinguished by its decorative units shaped like the sun at its centre, and embroidered with coloured threads and decorated with coloured plastic or mother-of-pearl buttons.

On the first wedding day the bride wears a black wedding dress, under which she wears



A woman's dress ***from the Valley***



Girls' costumes and jewellery in Siwa Oasis



A woman's dress
from the New Nalley





seven other silk dresses in different colours; the first is the white then the red, the black the yellow the blue the red, and last the green.

The Siwan woman wears red shoes decorated with coloured silk threads.

C. Al-Dakhla Oases

With Al-Kharga Oases, they make up Al-Wadi Al-Gidid Governorate. However, Al-Dakhala is the smaller of the two. In both areas, people are farmers.

Men's wear :

In both areas, men wear the clothes worn by the men in Upper Egypt and the Nile Valley.

Women's wear:

Also, women's clothes are similar to those of their counterparts in the Nile Valley. They only differ in the outer garment or what comes to be known as "occasion" dresses.

In Al-Dakhla, women's outdoors garment is called "thoub bisofrah"; it is made of black cotton, with long sleeves. It is decorated with geometrically shaped rows of red silk threads and buttons of plastic and mother-of-pearl. Also another row of silver coins is added, and the two sides of this dress are embroidered.

Just like women in the Nile Valley area, women here wear black veils called "tarha mahbouka". They also wear palmleaves hats called "alshamasi".

And they wear shoes called "almadass", which are now rare. In Al-Kharga, women's outer garment is called "thoub mahrar". Its chest, shoulders and sleeves are embroidered with red threads.

6- The Eastern Desert

Two tribes live in this area: Al-Ababdah and Al-Bashariyah. The former live in the northern part and the latter the southern part. People in this area are farmers. Still, some of them are fishermen .

Men from Al-Ababda wear long white cotton pants, fastened at the waist with a woolen belt, and wide white cotton shirts, with long sleeves. Its neckhole is wide and circular. Over the shirts, they wear black or blue woolen vests, open at the fornt and buttonless.

In winter or on social occasions they wear outer "galabiyas". They wear white cotton turbans on their heads.

As for women in this area, they wear a simple bright dress tight at the waist. It covers half their legs. For their headcover, they wear a head kerchief and a veil. When they go outdoors, they wear a long black dress or wrap their bodies with a long coloured garment called "alshugah".

Men from Al-Bashariyah tribes wear long wide pants and wide shirts; the two pieces are made of white light cotton called "dabalan", or "dammur". The young men also wear vests made of wool or bright black or blue broadcloth.

The Bashariyah men do not wear any headcovers; they hardly have their hair cut. When it grows long, it is called "kishah", which they anoint with castor oil or lubricating oil. For hair combs, they use "khilalma" whose long teeth are made of wood or bone.

Women's clothes are similar to those worn by Al-Ababda women.

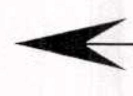
7- Al-Nuba (Nubia)

It is divided into two parts: Egyptian and Sudanese. The former extends to the south of Aswan city on both sides of the Nile.

People who live in the Egyptian area of Al-Nuba are divided into three groups: Alkinouz, the Fadga and Arab Al-Aukiylat. They all have their distinctive costumes.

Men's wear:

Al-Kinouz men wear multi-coloured "tawaqi" (head caps)-red, green and blue. They may wrap them with white turbans or a white cotton piece called "alkassrah". As for Al-Fadga



A decorative unit in the shape of three - petal flowers and triangles on the embroidery of a dress from Aswan area

Daily life clothes for women in Siwa Oasis







men, they wear white caps wrapped with a very long piece of white cotton cloth called "Alkasser".

However, all men of Al-Nuba wear the same clothes. They have wide white pants made of broadcloth or cotton, and fastened around the waist with a cotton belt called "tikah". Also they wear wide, long-sleeved shirts called "arraghe". It is different from "ghabeseddha" which was worn by the serfs and the poor; it is no longer in use.

As for the "occasion" dress, men wear "alaga", as it is called by the Arab tribes; the Fadga and Kinouz men call it "arhe". It is often made of wool; it is long and has a big neck hole. They also wear a white light shirt made of cloth called "rimsh alain". Some better - off men wear "alkakoula" or "algibah" and "kuftan".

Women's wear:

Al Fadga women wear bright multicoloured cotton or silk dresses, with long sleeves and high at the waist. When they go outdoors, they wear a black thin outfit, with wide long sleeves. It is long enough to touch the ground and hence it is called "dirdar".

With it, women wear a black silk or coloured veil, embroidered at the edges with coloured threads or beads. Some young ladies wear velvet shawls instead; they are called "sardhan".

Al-Kinouz women wear more or less the same clothes worn by Alfadga women, both in terms of design and colours.

They differ only in the outer garment. Here it is called "shuggah"; it is made of thin white cotton and is very long-five or six metres long. Women wrap it around their bodies and fasten it with a pin under their left shoulder. This pin is a decorative overturned crescent from which chains and a fish or a star hang. When their husbands pass away, women wear black dresses, or dye their white ones black- the colour of mourning. These women do not wear veils or shawls. Rather, they cover their heads with part of their "galabiyas" or "aldirdar". However, girls may wear striped cotton or velvet shawls called "Zigzag", whose stripes are wavy and the colours are bright. Their shoes are made of cow thick leather; they are orange or red. Alfadga men call these shoes "aldakka", whereas for Alkinouz people they are called "Kours". Still, the Arabs call it "almarkoub". The shoemaker is here called "alnaqalti".

8- Sinai:

Quite a number of bedouin tribes live in Sinai, they are related to tribes in South Palestine and Jordan and North Saudia. Some of them are farmers and the others are nomadic Bedouins.

Men's Wear:

Again, men wear the traditional cotton pants fastened around the waist with a woolen belt, and a light cotton long-sleeved shirt which is completely open at the front, with a broad leather belt around it. Also, a dagger hangs from the left side of this belt; on certain occasions they also carry a sword.

And in winter, they wear a black outer "abaya" (cloak) called "dinyah" made of goat or sheep wool.

"Al'uqda" is a headcover made of white light cloth, folded in the shape of a triangle whose angles cover men's back and shoulders, and wrapped around the head is a black cover called "iqal". In South Sinai, men wear a "turban".

Women's wear:

The Sinai bedouin women wear a long black cotton dress, embroidered with coloured silk threads in decorative fine units, which cover most of the holes of the dress; these holes are called "kaf albus", "almaqass", "alsunbulah" and "alhayah".

Women's marital status is indicated by the colour of the threads with which the dress is

Embroidery on the back of the dress called (birdan)



Headcover from Nubia : the (taqiyya) (head cap) and the turban

embroidered: the red for married women and the blue for virgins.

Also women wrap their waist with scarlet or white woolen belts.
When women are outdoors, they cover their whole body and head with a black scarf called "kinaa" or "khurgah". Its edges are embroidered with simple decorative units.

As for young women, they wear "alwiqayah", which is made of red cloth. It covers half their backs. Its front edge is decorated with gold or silver coins called "alkashashah"; they used to arrange these coins into rows, which indicate woman's age. Hence, when they are three rows, this means that the girl can get married.

Also some bedouin women wear a headcover called "sarkough", which is decorated with geometrically shaped buttons and seashells.

Women from different tribes wear different veils ("Khimars"); they cover a married woman's whole face except her eyes.

It is a red cloth band, from whose centre a row of metal coins hangs or it may consist of a number of bands, with each band decorated with some coins.

On both sides of the veil hang some metal chains, ending with coins (called "zingan") or coloured beads (called "shamarikh"). Women also hang a blue bead which they believe to protect against the evil eye or bring love and acceptance.

A bedouin woman is thought to be rich in proportion to the amount of silver or gold coins with which her veil is decorated. Hence, it is disgraceful for her to sell or replace her veil. When it is worn out, only its cloth is replaced, but never its coins.

The Wedding Dress:

Young ladies start very early on to prepare their wedding dress. Hence, it reflects each woman's character. What distinguishes it from the ordinary dress is that the former has triangular sleeves, with each of its apex reaching the tail of the dress, which is called "birdan".

The TATTOO IN FOLK ART

BY Sawsan Amer



The tattoo with which the rustics decorate their hands, chests, lips and faces is not a new invention. Rather, it dates back to ancient history, when people led a primitive life, sanctified certain animals, and were frightened by some natural phenomena, such as waves, winds, rain and thunder.

Thus, it can be said that the tattoos started in the totemic societies, which consisted of small tribes and clans. Each of those groups had its own "totem," which took an animal or vegetable form, or was a natural phenomenon, and which members of the clan held sacred and viewed as their symbol.

These symbols could be geometric shapes or lines that did not partake of the totems. Such symbols prevailed in the fields of drawing and painting as practised by Australian aboriginal groups.

Also parts of the animals and vegetables themselves were used as totemic symbols.

These symbols indicate both the totems of the clans and the clans themselves, just like at present the bear symbolizes Russia and the Cock France. Thus each totemic clan has its own distinctive symbol, which distinguishes whoever and whatever belong to it. This totemic symbol, therefore, is tattooed on the bodies of its members, their clothes, heads' coverings, weapons, tents, tombs, animals and properties.



A totem is, thus, a sacred emblem that members of a clan hold sacred. Consequently, totems sanctify the different parts of the human body especially blood and hair. Hence, blood and hair were part and parcel of such clans' religious rites and rituals.

The tattoo marking first came into being as a result of imprinting a clan's totem on the body of its members, then, blood gushed and mixed with the totemic tattoo both materially and morally.

Vestiges of such practices still live with us at present. A Christian would nominate a disciple or a saint to be his/her protector. Also some European nations would grow a tree on an infant's birthday and take very good care of it believing that the baby's and the tree's lives are bound together.

Also the pre-Islamic Arabs believed that each individual has a 'custodian' bird, whose life or death marks that of the individual. If the latter gets untimely murdered, so they believed, the bird keeps crying until the victim is avenged; only then can the bird stop crying. From this we can say that myths are not nonsense, but rather significant forms of thoughts and beliefs; they constitute an integral part of a group's worldview.

Significantly, despite the great advances made by science and technology in modern times, tattoos persist and continue to live with us. It seems that science can hardly replace such early forms of human beliefs and practices. Modern man is not completely freed from such reverence-inspiring objects as they constitute his link to the supernatural in the universe.

Some Egyptologists ascertain that Ancient Egyptians practiced tattoo marking under the umbrella of their old religion.

They also used it for decorative purposes. Dr. Kemir stated that he studied tattoo prints in the mummies of Pharaonic dancers. He observed that the part of the body with the tattoos is the same where ornaments were worn . This may account for what some dancers nowadays do when they wear jewellery on certain places of their bodies: a residue practice from the farthest past. This is most practised in Upper-Egypt, where the ancient Egyptian life flourished. Unlike the Upper Egptian women, the Northern Egyptians were influenced by different invadors' civilizations.

In Upper-Egypt, the tattoo takes a standard shape: the lower lip is all covered in green and the tattoo on the chin connects it with the lip.

However, the tattoo was not restricted to beautification purposes; it was also used as a means of curing some diseases. It was believed to protect against the 'evil eye'. The triangle-shaped charm and what is known as (Khamsa wa Khimisa) are but relics of such ancient folk beliefs and practices.

Also such symbolic objects in folk art like 'the two fish' and 'the palm-tree' are related to the tattoo marking in Ancient Egypt. The latter symbolizes affluence, fecundity and fertility, and the fish is symbolic of a great number of offspring.

As for the green sparrow, it immediately recalls the famous Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris, with its abundant symbols of love, loyalty, and the triumph of good over evil, and life over death. Hence, the green sparrow symbolizes fertility, good, and life. This myth of Isis and Osiris has its great influence upon a great number of current folk tales now.

With the advent of Christianity to Egypt, during the Roman rule, the tattoo lived on. The most well-known then was St. Girguis' tattoo.

St. Girguis was a brave knight in the Roman army; he was handsome and held a high position in the state. The Roman Ruler held him in high esteem. However, he was converted to Christendom, and became a staunch defender/ preacher of that new religion. Thus, he set a wonderful example of the brave man who could defy the most tyrannical Romans, gave

up the abundant and most comfortable worldly life for the sake of his sublime faith. He did this to the extent of martyrdom; for the Romans murdered him.

In response to this horrific event, the folk artist commemorated it in a magnificent work. He depicted the martyr-saint on the back of his horse, holding a long spear with which he is killing a huge snake that is trying to devour him. Meanwhile, a virgin lass is looking with pity and fear at the great warrior.

The folk artist here reveals his attachment to his society and the crucial role he plays as the "conscience" of his nation. He admires the brave Saint and portrays him as a brave, powerful knight, who symbolizes good. And as a symbol of the horrific power of evil in our life he depicts the snake, the traditional symbol of the devil. The beautiful virgin lass symbolizes the whole Christian nation fearing for their hero/savior.

As mentioned above, the tattoo art always kept pace with the happenings and changes in the society. Thus, it has its influence upon a lot of folk arts. The sweet statue (doll), in the form of a knight on a horse that is seen at Nativity festivities, is inspired by the above martyr-saint event.

With the emergence of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula (Saudia Arabia now) and its spread to other neighbouring Arab countries and Egypt, the whole area was transformed. New ideas, values, practices and beliefs transformed the structure of people's arts and thoughts-their life.

But the most significant change and the one that is relevant to folk art is that some Muslim scholars (Ulama) went to the extreme of prohibiting sculpture and painting, arguing that such activities violate Islamic tenets and principles. As a result of this opinion, the art of decoration prevailed. Consequently, the folk artist coped with this change; he temporarily left aside painting, and focused on the tattoo



The (Mahmal) the deer and the palmtree are all popular sy, bols. (From the collection of the Egyptian Geagraphic Society)

art and added new ornamental and geometric units to it, such as 'the star', 'the moon', 'the crescent' and 'the flowerpot'.

Thus, the tattoo art developed to keep pace with the new religious trends and tenets. It therefore excluded, for a while, portraying people and maintained other forms such as drawing the fish as a symbol of fertility and abundance of offspring. Hence, rural young ladies used to tattoo the fish as a sign of good omen, i.e. to ward off the idea of sterility. Also the snake, in different forms, and the jug have similar symbolic meanings in folk art.

The Islamic conquests of the two great Roman and Persian empires marked the begin-

ning of the spread of Islamic religion to adjacent countries. These two empires were highly civilized and were the two superpowers at that time. However, a number of primitive Arab Bedouins managed to conquer them and take over all their satellite countries. The new Muslim rulers established a new civilization, mainly due to the new religion and its philosophy. From this religion they took the values which enabled them to control the whole area then.

Naturally folk literature and art coped with such feats and heroic deeds. Hence, the tattoo art depicted such authentic Arab values as courage, boldness, and nobility. The folk artists also gave expression to such euphoric historical moments, focusing on great historical figures who played founding roles then.

The folk artist has always been greatly moved by certain noble values and ideals. Boldness and magnanimity move his deep human feelings and capture his imagination. Hence, most outstanding among the famous folk narratives are those of Abu-Zid Al-Hilali and Sief Ibn Zi yazin. In his book **Folk Literature Arts** (Vol. II), the late Ahmed Rushdi Saleh states that the historical narrative was originally a kind of report on a real event or a vision, which was orally transmitted. This oral transimission allowed for additions and omissions to the extent that the fictional became the basic component of the work and the actual the subsidiary. For this art derives basically from analysing the character types and happenings of a given society.

Hence, it is commonplace that a narrative combines both fictional and real characters. A story-teller is free to invent characters or events which he traces to real characters. Also he can take liberty with time and place, by bringing together figures and events which are spatio-temporally far apart. What concerns this narrator most is the historical experiment and its significance in terms of human experience, and not the historical fact per se. For example, "Sirat Antarah" (The Biography of a pre-Islamic epic hero called Antarah Ibn Shaddad) includes events taken from pre-Islamic and Islamic times as well as events derived from the crusades.

For Ahmed Rushdy Saleh this is quite acceptable as a folk tale, which unlike scientific truth, is primarily meant to be didactic; that is, to keep the younger generations in touch with their authentic customs, values, and practices. But meantime, it seeks to entertain them and enhance their artistic sense.

It seems here that the folk tale seeks fundamentally to bring into focus the feats of a certain hero, which necessitates, very often than not, the additions of certain heroic deeds and attributing them to the hero so as to appeal to the ordinary people. El-Zir Salem's tattoo marks make people see him as an absolutely brave man. The tattoo shows him as a man with a big moustache riding a lion, instead of a horse, which is emblematic of his great courage. Also Antara's tattoos drive home the same meaning. He is shown to be a brave warrior who is defending his tribe and his sweetheart Abla. Such heroic deeds captured the imagination of the folk artist and inspired him to create wonderful folk literature and art.

Also it is worth stressing here that Antarah Ibn Shaddad, the pre-Islamic folk hero, was a black slave. Significantly, to commemorate his biography is an indicator of the historical fact that the Arabs very early on rid themselves of the disgrace of racial discrimination, a civilizational orientation that is unparalleled even in some of the most advanced countries today.

Another significant fact here is that the tattoo art is found in many Arab countries. One implication here is that the Arabs have a lot in common: ways of thinking, feelings, and forms of artistic expression. This means that Pan-Arabism is first and above all a cultural, historical fact, enhanced by common political and economic interests. Another very significant implication is that Pan-Arabism, which colonizers have, for a historical period, spared no effort to obliterate, is certain to be revived and thrive again.

Under the Ottoman rule, the tattoo drawings, just like other folk arts, seemed to suffer neglect and decline.

True, the Ottoman Turks did not transport the tattoo artists to Constantinople and other cities, as they did with almost all the skilled artisans; however this was basically due to the artistic decline of all folk arts. For the artist, directly or indirectly, is influenced by his/her environment. During all the colonial periods, folk arts almost came to a standstill. Only in the field of national clothes could the art of tattoo play a positive role, which led to their development.

Eventually, it can be noticed that the tattoo is a folk art that can exist only in relation to other folk arts in general. The tattoo on a rural man's forearm is completed by the popular poems he hears in the enviroment around him, and it is also echoed in the coloured pictures of the mythical folk heroes. The tattoo can also take on the character of an identification card, as some people tattoo their names and birthdates on their forearms.

Also tattoos are used as charms, such as when someone imprints "ayat al-Kursi"- a Qur'anic verse- on his arm, or as when a child is tattooed on his/her forehead so as to ward off the fear of his younger brethren and sisters' death.

Also the ballad of "Hassan and Nayema" is a very good example of the interrelation of the various forms of folkloric arts: the tale, the tattoo, the ballad, music, etc. This ballad is very popular and it has played a very positive role in shaping our collective consciousness, especially in the rural areas, where the peasants keep narrating it to each other.



POTTERY AND CERAMICS

By Aida Khattab



Ethnographists refer to pottery as one of the oldest manifestations of man's material heritage going back to the new stone age that dates from 5000 to 3500 B.C.

Pottery, which might have been discovered by chance, fulfilled basic needs of primitive men. Besides the initial usage of pots for magic purposes, these useful containers served a myriad of purposes.

Given the importance of such a a natural substance, the Holy Quran refers to it in more than one place, in relation to the creation of mankind: "Man We did create from a quintessence of clay", "He created man from sounding clay like unto pottery".

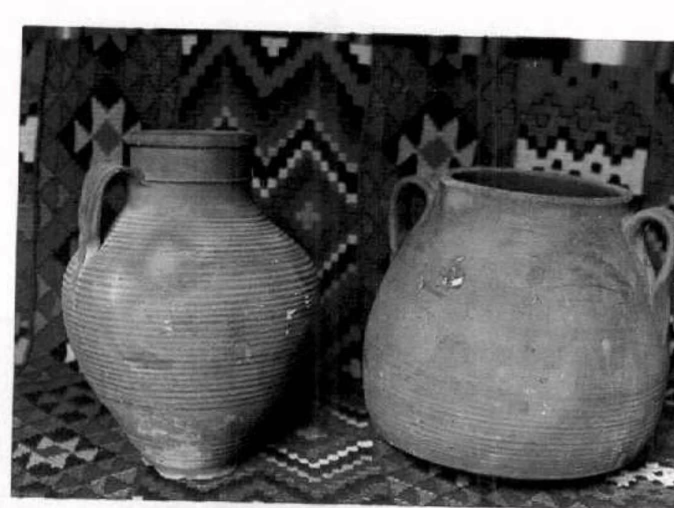
Pots stood the test of time. In Ancient Egypt, they were used for everyday purposes as well as for preparation for the life hereafter. A visit to the Egyptian Museum or to the tombs of Beni Hassan reveals how conscious the ancient Egyptians were of the uses of pots. They used them for keeping grains, foods and liquids. They also used them as containers for mummified matter because of their durability and endurance. Ancient Egyptians developed and perfected the manufacture of pots using red clay in particular. They also painted their pots using different colours. Forms of Pharaonic pottery are mainly simple, graceful and well-defined.



Pottery pots .

From the collection of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo

The black pottery.
From the collection of
Al - Sharqiya pottery,
Museum of Folk
Arts.



A collection of Al - Sharqiya pottery, Museum of Folk Arts

It is noteworthy that Ancient Egyptians might have used pottery wheels as early as the first dynasty. However, some scholars place it in the fifth dynasty. The wheel features in a fifth dynasty tomb in Saqqara and on a twelfth century tomb in Beni Hassan. The Ancient Egyptian god Khnum is also presented as creating man on a pottery wheel in many Pharaonic temples.

Greek pottery is equally simple and is characterised by its fine decoration . Roman pottery, on the other hand, is known for its red clay and black decoration done in relief. Pottery flourished in Coptic Egypt as monks occupied themselves with its manufacture in workshops near their convents.

Coptic pots, dishes and flasks are adorned with symbols and decorative patterns. Frogs, fishes, crosses, grapes, animals, birds as well as pictures of monks and saints, and some Coptic words feature on them.

Islamic artists developed pottery by varying its forms. Cups, dishes, bowls, ewers, water-jugs, candelabras, lamps, vases, small statues and toys appeared in various forms that owed much to the ingenuity of the Islamic artistic tradition.

Islamic artists contributed as well to the art of decoration. Arabic calligraphy is unique to the Islamic arts. Its flexibility allows the artists to integrate it with other decorative units. 'Naskh' and 'Kufi' are the two main Arabic styles used on pottery. Other decorative units include plants, fruits, flowers, animals, birds, fishes and persons represented in imitation of reality or in an abstract style. The manufacture of pottery and ceramics in the Islamic age, from the seventh to the seventeenth century A.D. in particular, is the subject of a vast body of literature that treats the development of the craft and its aesthetic aspects.

Raw Materials:

Clay is the principal raw material used for the manufacture of pottery and ceramics. There are different kinds of clay used for different kinds of pottery. Mixing kinds of clay produces pots noted for their resilience and texture or for their size that has a functional role.

There are three kinds of clay: the yellow Tabini clay, pertaining to Tabin in Helwan, Aswan clay, and dark Nile clay.

It is the Nile clay that surpasses the two other kinds in quality and provides the main input for the manufacture of pots in Egypt since ancient times. It was formed throughout the ages from the silt deposited annually by the Nile.

Preparing the Clay and Initial Stages of Manufacture:

The process for preparing the clay for pot-making may differ from one workshop to another. However, the common target is always presenting a pliable substance for the craftsman to work with.

Al-Fostat workshops, for example, are the biggest centre in Egypt for pots made of Nile clay. The following procedure is used to prepare clay:

1. The Draining Basin: (known as 'al-kose') This basin is lined with cement to prevent water seeping. Clay is mixed with water in precise proportions necessary to produce the required density for each product.

2. The Drying Basin: (known as 'al-nose'): this basin allows the seeping and filtering of water from clay after clearing it from unwanted residues in the first basin. The mixture is kept in the basin, for a week in summer or for two weeks in winter, until it dries up and cracks whether due to weather conditions or manual treatment in certain cases. The clay-master then divides the clay into large lumps that are stored in the clay-house. The clay house is a store room where material for a year's work is kept in favourable conditions.

Whenever clay is needed, a portion of clay known as 'tabita' is cut out by a worker known

as 'al-dawwas'. He squashes the clay with his feet gradually adding some sand that increases the flexibility of clay, protects the final product against cracking or breaking during heating and gives it a porous body. The squashing continues until a certain degree of cohesion is reached. The squashing finished, one of the apprentices cuts out a small piece of clay known as 'kharta'. He squashes it with both hands on a table known as 'dastah' that is half a meter high. He adds more sand for the same previous reasons and also in order to prevent the clay sticking to the table. Having prepared it for shaping, the apprentice rolls the piece of clay in the form of a solid cylinder and hands it over to the pot-maker working on his machine known as 'al-dulab'. The pot-maker gives shape to the cylinder of clay prior to producing various models of pots. He uses some tools like 'al-garut' and 'al-sadif'.

In other workshops, different methods are used. In Qena, for example, cattle squash clay deposited in basins and mingle it with their dung which is an important ingredient in the formation of clay.

The folk artist produces a myriad of models that meet daily needs such as cooking pots, dishes and containers for storing grain. Pottery was, as afore-mentioned, known and used in Egypt as early as the new stone age. On display in the Egyptian museum, there is a variety of pots that were used for drinking and cooling water and conserving food; cutlery as well was made of clay. The Beni Hassan tombs keep a faithful record of the development of pottery in Ancient Egypt.

Present-day pots serve different purposes: holding liquids, storing grain and preserving food. They are also used for growing plants and making musical instruments (various kinds of drums), incense burners, oil-lamps and toys.

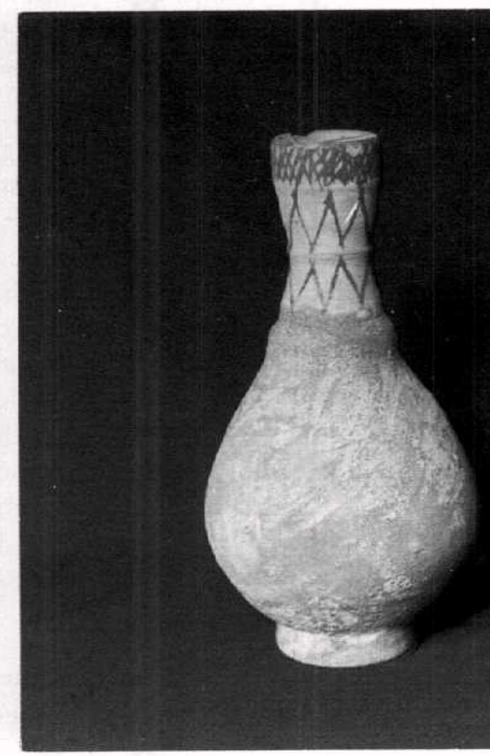
Pots for holding liquids:

These are 'al-kedrah' for holding oil, ghee and honey; al-zeer, al-garrah and al-bakal for transporting and holding water.

Al-Kedrah

'Al-Kedrah' is a widely used pot since the time of the Pharaohs. Throughout the ages, it





The black pottery



Decoration of plates. Garagos, Qena

kept its distinctive form with only slight variations. There is a beautiful model of a 'kedrah' kept in the Egyptian Museum.

The most common 'kedrah' is the one in which ghee is stored. This is known as 'boshah' in Lower Egypt and as 'tabshayah arweyah' in Upper Egypt.

The 'kedrah' is shaped in different sizes on the 'dulab' or pottery machine. There are eight different sizes that may hold a maximum of 40 lbs. and a minimum of 1 lb. of ghee.

Al-Qanater Al-Khayriya is famous for producing a variety of 'kedras' made of all types of clay: Tabini, Aswan and Nile clay. These

'kedras' are given a glazed coating from both the inside and outside. The coating is often of a green, yellow or brown colour and is known as tiger skin.

The shape of the 'kedra' varies from one place to the other. For instance, the 'kedra' used for storing ghee or oil has different shapes in Sinai (where it is known as 'bagseyah), Upper Egypt and Cairo. The Sinai 'kedra' is hung by the handles to the ceiling. It is black in colour and looks like Al-Sharqiya 'kedra' except for its shades of black into grey.

Al-Zeer

It is a big container used for storing and cooling a large quantity of water. Smaller pots (kolahs) are filled from the zeer. The shape of al-zeer goes back to Pharaonic times. The Egyptian Museum houses a great many number of zeers with the imprint of their makers and the place of their production. Fatimite Egypt is also known for pottery which flourished till the fifteenth century.

The Islamic Museum holds a collection of small zeers, glazed and coloured. These were used for keeping precious items such as camphor powder, amber, pearls and jewellery. However, most zeers are made of unglazed filter clay to allow the cooling of water.

The body and the neck of the zeer, done separately, are joined together. Its outer surface is then somoothed with a 'garut'. Qena and Al-Fostat are famous for manufacturing zeers. Medium and small size zeers are Al-Fostat's speciality while Qena produces large size ones. Small zeers, known as 'hammami' zeers or 'zewayra' in the oases, are used for holding water.

Early in the century, 'sabils' (marble-lined small rooms) were built to house zeers for passers-by to drink from.

Al-Garrah

Al-Garrah, known in the countryside as 'al-ballas' is a widely used water container. A 'garrah' is small in size to allow transportation of water. It has a convex base to allow tilting it sideways to pour water and two handles to carry it with.

In spite of the prevalence of al-ballas in both Upper and Lower Egypt, its manufacture is limited to Al-Ballas town in Qena, the only region where its raw material is available. Sail boats transport ballases all over the country.

Al-Ballas clay acts as an excellent filter. Its light grey colour turns greenish white when burnt.

Other forms of al-garrah are used elsewhere. In Sinai, 'al-bogseyah' (a wide-mouthed ballas) is used. 'Al-Segga', oval in shape with a cylindrical neck, is used in the New Valley.

Al-Bakal

Al-Bakal is used instead of al-ballas in Beni-Sweif and Al-Fayum. A different method of manufacture is used in the case of 'al-bakal'. A spherical hole is dug and lined with straw. Clay and straw are then built around the hole. The neck of 'al-bakal' is gradually narrowed towards its mouth. It is then transferred to dry up in the sun. The mouth is done separately on a dulab and fitted onto it.

Cooking Utensils:

Abremah and Tawagen

Qena is an important centre for pottery in general and 'al-tagen' and 'al-biram' in particular. Hejaza and Dandara, to the south east of Qena and 22 km. from Al-Qusair, are well-known for manufacturing these cooking utensils. It is a family business as men work on the 'dulab' while their wives prepare handles and their children help in the preparation of clay.

There is also a cooking utensils factory in Dandarah where 'al-kests' used for cooking beans and lentils in ovens, are made.

The main models of tawagen are:

1. Unpainted tagin with a single handle. Four protruding pieces (each pair is similar) are fitted to it.

2. Unpainted tagin, prepared on the 'dulab', with four handles: two small ones and two big ones of a pink colour.

Tawagen and abremah are widely used in Egypt. They are usually made of unpainted clay. They come in different sizes to meet all demands. Al-Fawakheer area in Misr Al-Qadima or Al-Fostat is well-known for their manufacture.

3. Tajeens: a local phonetic variant of 'tagin' as pronounced in Nubia. There are different sizes of tajeens. The surface of the container is in polished red. Its mouth protrudes to allow holding and carrying it. Three carved lines that decorate the mouth divide the latter into handles. A similar container used for cooking rice and beans in Al-Bahariya oasis is known as 'bormah'.

Containers for Storing Grain (Sawamee)

Sawamee-making is a craft mastered by most Nubian women. One 'sawmaah' or more exists in almost every Nubian house. These are used for storing different kinds of crops and produces such as maize, barley and dates.

Sawamee are placed on the roof of houses in Lower Egypt and in the basement of Upper Egyptian ones.

All Egyptian 'sawamee' are manufactured along similar lines. Clay is mixed with dung or straw and given a prism shape. 'Sawamee' must be large and their walls must be thick to support the heavy weight of their contents and to withstand tear and wear. They also have big mouths and sometimes a cover to keep the contents safely.

Models of 'sawamee' differ from one area to the other. Nubian 'sawamee', for instance, are decorated with clay ornaments in relief, china plates, sea shells or mirrors. The upper mouth is sometimes covered with a clay disk. A lower mouth may be made to draw grain from. This opening is then blocked with clay wrapped in a piece of cloth.

It takes two to three days for a 'sawmaah' to dry up. A little incense is then burnt inside it. This renders the walls more solid and eliminates humidity responsible for rotting the stored foods. Incense is also valued on religious bases.

Drinking Containers: 'al-kollah' and 'al-ibriq'.

Kollahs used to cool water go back to Pharaonic times. They feature on the walls of temples. The Egyptian Museum displays a wide collection of kollas. These are made of light brown porous clay with red circles of red lining and are 35 cm. in height.

Kollahs are commonly used in the old, densely populated quarters of Egypt. They are usually placed in a brass tray facing air currents on a window-sill. A brass top covers its mouth. Mint or lemon leaves are placed inside the neck on the kollah window (separating the inner space between neck and body) to add scent to the water.

Kollahs are manufactured in three stages. The body and the neck of the kollah are done separately on the 'dulab'. They are joined together on the second day. Preparing the window of the kollah allowing water to flow from the body to the neck is the last stage.

Al-Fostat in Misr Al-Qadima is one of the most famous manufacturing centres in Egypt, followed by Qena. Assyut comes third.

The most widely known kollah in Al-Wadi Al-Gadid is the wedding kollah. It is filled with incense and decorated with coloured beads and coins.

In Assyut, a different manufacturing procedure is followed. A woman gives a piece of clay the shape of a semi-sphere against the wall of a hole she digs in the ground. She uses a piece of burnt clay as well as her other hand, to smoothe the inside of what will be the body of the kollah. A craftsman then takes over the spherical body with the intention of elongating and rendering it thinner with the aid of a

Formations and products from Kafr- Al - Ballas in Upper Egypt .

wooden tool. He beats the walls from the outside while holding the body with his other hand from the inside until he gives the body the shape of a rimless bowl. Another craftsman finishes the kollah on the dulab adding handles to its body. The kollah is left to dry up in the sun. The final product is amazingly uniform and harmonious despite the fact that it is not the handiwork of a single craftsman.

Kollahs come in different models : 'makaneh' (machine), 'sheshah' (hubble-bubble), 'bashtaka', 'battah' (duck), 'bannorah' (crystal), 'harmalah', 'charleston', 'rusasi' (grey), 'Abbasya' for children, 'megwezah' (double) and 'mefredah' (single). Al-Ibriq is made of the same raw material as the kollah. However, it differs in its design. Whereas kollas have a bulging lower part - a feminine physical trait - ibriqs have a thinner lower part and a bulging upper one, as well as a handle and a pouring spout evoking masculine physical traits.

An ibriq or a kollah is in the centre of 'subu"celebrations (the seventh day of the birth of a child). Ibriqs feature in 'subu" of male children, kollahs in 'subu" of females.

Subu's kollahs come in different sizes and can reach a height of 70 to 80 cm. The taller the kollah is, the greater the number of candles attached in rounds encircling its body. These rounds can number up to seven in big kollahs.



Al- kollah on the turning wheel

(Al - dulab)

Decorative elements help assign female traits to 'subu's' kollahs. An uppermost head figure represents a girl with long hair, breasts and a thin waist. Candles on a kollah may decide the name of the newly-born child. They are given names and then lit. The name given to the last candle that remains lit becomes the child's name.

The wall of kollahs may also be decorated with triangular, circular and plant units in which phrases of religious significance such as "praise be to God," "God is Almighty" or congratulatory messages, are written.



Pot - makers.

Food Containers

These are mainly dishes, and bowls

Dishes

Dishes are the most widely prevalent food container. They vary in size and in models as well. They may be flat or deep, big or small, circular or oval.

A variety of antique dishes, some of which are quite big, are displayed in the Egyptian Museum. Big dishes were used in the Islamic era as well. The Arab historian, Al-Maqrizi, refers to dishes that can hold a whole sheep. Only a group of men can carry such dishes around.

The manual manufacture of dishes is widely used in Qena side by side with the dulab method. Household needs determine the size of these dishes. Small dishes meet individual needs while bigger dishes are used in banquets.

In Nubia, 'al-kasb' container (also known as 'al-kala') - a polished dish of red clay whose edge and base are remarkably thick - is widely used for serving food, sour milk in particular (known in Nubia as 'zibdiya'). It was also used in the decoration of houses before the invention of porcelain. 'Kasbs' were fitted onto the walls of houses and hung from the ceilings, specially of wedding chambers, with wool threads. According to Nubian tradition, these dishes are also filled with water and placed by the side of graves for birds to drink from. This tradition may have an African origin as it is observed by the Ashanty tribes.

Al-Kasb is also traditionally related to the visits Nubians pay to the shrines of holy men. Food is stored in kasbs for this journey. When celebration comes to an end, Nubians return to their villages leaving behind them their empty kasbs in the belief that blessings will be granted them.

In Al-Wad--Gadid, 'al-zibdiya' - a counterpart of 'al-kasb' - is widely used for eating purposes.

Al-Sultaniya (Bowls)

Sultaniyas look like cups, especially those used for one person. They have thin edges curved in such a way as to hold liquids safely.

Sulataniyas may well be the first container ever known by man along his history. Its simple design shows as far back in history as the early periods in Egyptian history. The Egyptian Museum houses a collection of 'sultaniyas' simply designed and modelled on the shape of man's hands held together to carry water. The Islamic Museum as well has a collection of sultaniyas, beautifully designed and decorated, on display.

The development of the shape of the sultaniya, still in keeping with its function, witnessed the introduction of a thin base which added an aesthetic dimension to its form. Al-Fawakheer, in Misr Al-Qadima is known for the manufacture of sultaniyas on the dulab; these are later glazed. In Siwa oasis, 'mo'li' is a counterpart of the sultaniya.

Al-Zebdiya (Yoghurt bowl)

Al-Zebdiya is a widely used polished container mainly manufactured in Al-Fostat.

Zebdiyas come in different sizes. They are only manufactured from dark clay and are lined with liquid mud. It is sometimes glazed from the inside or from both inside and outside.

In Sinai, 'al-boushah' is a wide-mouthed container used to hold milk.

In Al-Bahariya oasis, containers for keeping milk are also known as 'boushah'. As for Nubia, 'al-joka' or 'al-haki' is a globular container with a handle and a fount. It is red in colour and decorated with black lines in the shape of intersecting triangles or in the shape of vertical and horizontal intersecting lines. Al-joka is used for keeping milk and other liquids. In Al-Wadi Al-Gadid, milk is kept in 'al-hetab'.

Flower Pots

Flower pots are of two kinds: non-porous,

non filtering pots in which artificial plants are kept; and the porous, filtering ones used for plants. The latter kind is the cone shaped container widely prevalent in gardens and balconies. The cone shape allows for economy in space in the process of burning and later on in storing.

New models are also presently available. A globular shape is used with a wavy-patterned edge. Quite often, it is placed on a plate whose edge is similarly designed.

Al-Magour

Al-Magour is a kneading pot where bread in particular is kneaded and left to rise. Its manufacture requires a high degree of precision to keep its cone-like shape. In Kafr AL-Nahal, Sharqiya, craftsmen are helped by their apprentices to shape the magour. Once it is solid enough, the internal wall is painted with a lining of Tabin clay (obtained from Tabin town, 35 km. to the south of Helwan). The craftsman then forms circular lines with his fingers. Finally, he ties the magour with ropes from the outside to prevent its cracking. The magour is then wrapped in rice straw and left in the shade to dry up.

Al-Magour is known as 'tird' in Al-Bahariya oasis and 'kashkola' in Sinai. In Nubia, it is also known as 'magour'; it is made of red clay, globular, and is provided with three solid handles.

Drums

Early drums were made of hollow trunks of trees. However, with the progress of mankind, clay was used in the making of drums. Scholars believe that the making of drums goes back to the year 2000 B.C. Their belief rests on a specimen that was excavated in Anatolia and is presently kept in a Turkish museum. Similar items were excavated in Palestine; these drums were in use long before their appearance in Egypt. Drums are shaped on the dulab.

Centres for Pottery Manufacture

Aswan Governorate

Nubia

Nubian women form the bulk of pottery manufacturers. This is a tradition that can be explained by the fact that in Nubia women had to shoulder a good deal of family responsibilities because of the frequent absence of husbands.

Manual handling of clay is common in Nubia. Pottery construction depends on the building of layers based on a kind of hollow shell that forms the lower part of the container. The 'dulab' is unknown to Nubian women manufacturers. Dahmeet and Adandan are two well known centres for pottery making. There is a uniform Nubian style for shaping and decorating pots passed on from one generation to the next. Each village has its master-manufacturer. Dara is the name of a famous master-manufacturer of African origin. Her production was prolific in the fifties.

Qena Governorate

Qena is considered the most important centre for pottery. Hegaza, in particular, produces cooking utensils. The whole community share in manufacturing pots. Men work on dulabs, women make handles and children prepare the clay.

Dandara, to the north of Qena, is another important centre for the manufacture of pots.

Assyut Governorate

Assuyt used to be an important centre for the manufacture of red pots mainly used for the purposes of decoration. A different method other than the dulab is adopted. Hollow clay moulds are hardened, pierced in a number of places and a rod is fitted into it. Clay is then pasted onto the external wall of the mould and the rod is turned around until the outer clay is smoothed over. Blowing into the mould separates the pot from the mould by means of the air passing through the holes. Different parts of pots are done separately and then are then joined together. Decorations are carved in red

and black. The creativity and fineness of these decorations are quite evident, in spite of the limited resources and the primitive tools of their makers.

Al-Wadi Al-Gadid

Al-Qasr village in Al-Wadi Al-Gadid is well-known for a pottery factory that goes back in time for some centuries. It is the property of a single family and the profession is inherited from one generation to the next. This factory produces 'al-segga' used for carrying water; it is an oval counterpart of the ballas, prevalent in the Egyptian countryside. 'Al-Rawiya', a counterpart of the kollah, is also produced there.

Sinai

The dulab is used in Sinai for the manufacture of pots. Most pots are black in colour while very few are white. Two factories produce pots in Al-Arish and in Bayt Al-Haseen. Typical Sinai pots are 'al-bargaseya' for keeping butter, 'al-garra' and 'al-agana' for carrying water, 'al-bosha' for keeping milk, 'al-zebdiya' for eating, 'al-ibriq' for drinking and a special pot for grounding coffee.



ORNAMENTAL UNITS IN OLD NUBIA

BY GAWDAT ABDELHAMID YOUSSEF



Three hundred and twenty km south to the Aswan Dam, Nubians used to live in villages that spread out in three areas along a narrow strip of land bordering both banks of the River Nile: al-Kunuz in the north, al-Arab in the middle and al-Fadija in the south. It is the heritage of each area, rather than any natural boundaries, that set these sections apart. Each area had its particular language, architecture and ornaments, social customs and arts. However, the Nubian spirit unites various aspects of the heritage of these areas and endows them with a distinctive taste.

The land of Nubia suffered with the building of the Aswan Dam. Nubian heritage was inundated. However, reconstruction followed along the same principles of the Nubian heritage. With the first and second elevation of the Aswan Dam, Nubian villages were drowned except for four southern villages in Fadija where hundreds of old houses still stand. Consequently, records of architecture and ornamental design in Nubia go back only to 1933.

A major dislocation of the Nubian people who migrated to Kom Ombo and a final submergence of what came to be called Old Nubia occurred in 1964 with the diversion of the Nile course and the building of the High Dam. Lake Nasser, the largest artificial lake in the world, gradually covered Nubian lands.

Nubians speak Arabic as well as two other

local languages in al-Kunuz and al-Fadija. Only al-Arab in the middle were uninfluenced by local languages and speak only Arabic. Both local languages are spoken but not written.

As for plastic arts, it was al-Fadija down south that was influenced by the artistic achievement of al-Kunuz and al-Arab that lie to its north. Al-Kunuz artists created ornamental units, both carved and in relief, to decorate houses' facades and roofs. On the other hand, al-Arab houses had plain facades with repetitive patterns of ornamentation all coloured in white. Both styles influenced al-Fadija whose artists used carved and relief ornaments created in a single colour.

A Nubian house can be looked upon as a cultural museum that brings together the arts of architecture as well as exterior and interior design. It is therefore impractical to generalise about ornamental units in Old Nubia. Each area has distinctive features that become more particular as we view each house separately.

No two houses look alike in Old Nubia. Design, decorative patterns, entrance to the houses differ even if executed by the same artist. A palm tree may be a common decorative motif but palm trees feature differently on different houses. Photographs shown on these pages are not therefore representative of Old Nubia but are rather examples drawn from three Nubian areas: Dahmeet in al-Kunuz, al-Subu' in al-Arab and Adendan in al-Fadija.

A common feature however in Nubian architecture and decoration is a one-storey building, employing local material such as hewn stone and palm tree trunks for construction and natural metal oxides for colouring while very little wood is used.

The use of china dishes, glued to the facades of houses, is another common feature. They appear as part of the artistic formation of facades and denote Nubian generosity.

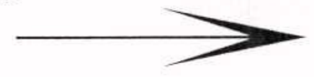
Dahmeet is the second largest village in al-Kunuz. Its arable lands, as was the case with al-Kunuz region, suffered as a result of the construction and elevation of the Aswan Dam. However, plastic arts thrived as ample time gave artists an opportunity to turn al-Kunuz into the richest of Nubia. Fast disappearing plants and palm trees found their way in ornamental units reproduced on the facades of al-Kunuz houses.

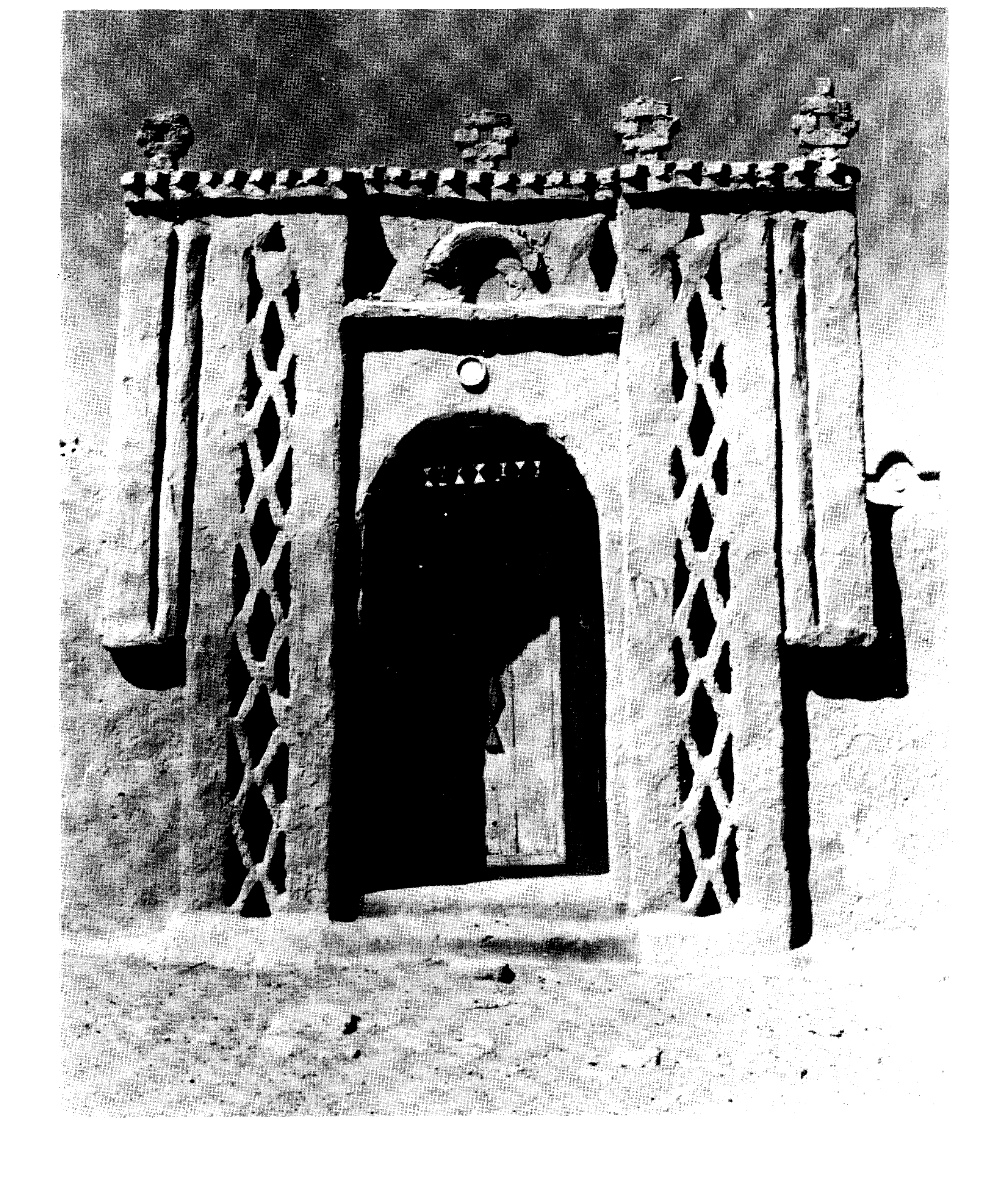


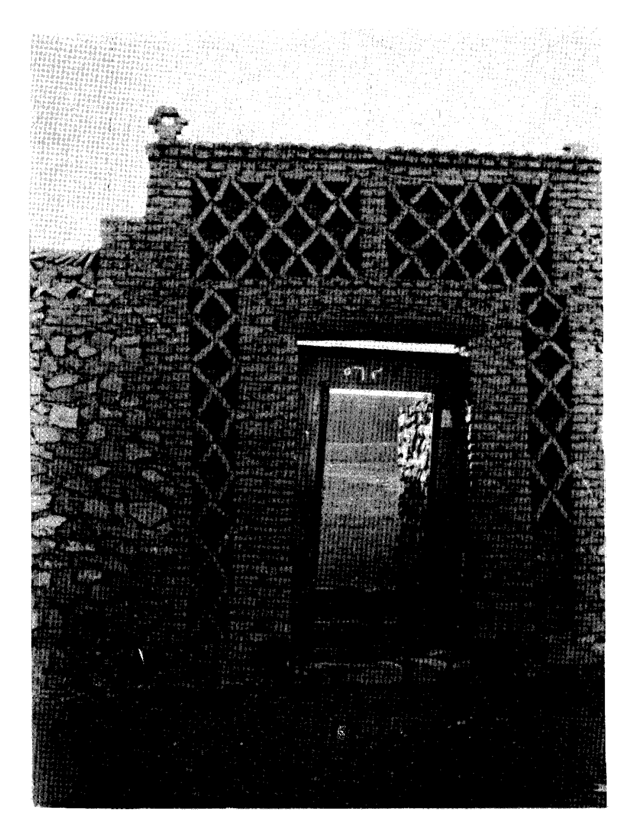
The first picture shows the doorway to a house in Dahmeet. It was already built but its external mud layer was never applied as immigration was underway. With the passing of time decorative components fell out.

The doorway occupies a single plane with the entrance in the middle surrounded with a plain framework. A vertical line of rhombuses and triangles is seen alongside the framework. There is also a rectangle whose breadth reaches to a little before the door axis. This rectangle also includes carved rhombuses and triangles in what looks like al-mashrabiyya (an ornamental arabesque window made of wood).

Top decoration of the doorway takes the shape of a straight line of bricks that protrudes a little above its height. Three dimensional triangles made from bricks too and executed in relief run along that straight line. A statue of a doll is installed on both sides of that line of triangles. One of the dolls is destroyed while the other is somewhat intact. The final shape of the doorway is hard to imagine as it is almost impossible to predict the idiosyncratic creativity of Dahmeet artists







The second picture shows another doorway of a Dahmeet house completed just before immigration. Simplicity is the key to its artistic achievement. A limited number of units is used in its decoration. Pylon architectural lines, that go back to the times of ancient Egyptian temples, can be seen. These rise to double the height of the fence that surrounds the house. On each side of the doorway there is a pillar standing above the height of the fence. The middle third of each pillar carries the decorative pattern of carved rhombuses and triangles.

The higher third facing outward features a single longitudinal unit that has the shape of a semi-cylinder.

The middl third protruding line on either side of the doorway. This same line retreats a little over the doorway itself. Above this line there is a number of triangular units. Three dolls adorn the top of the facade.

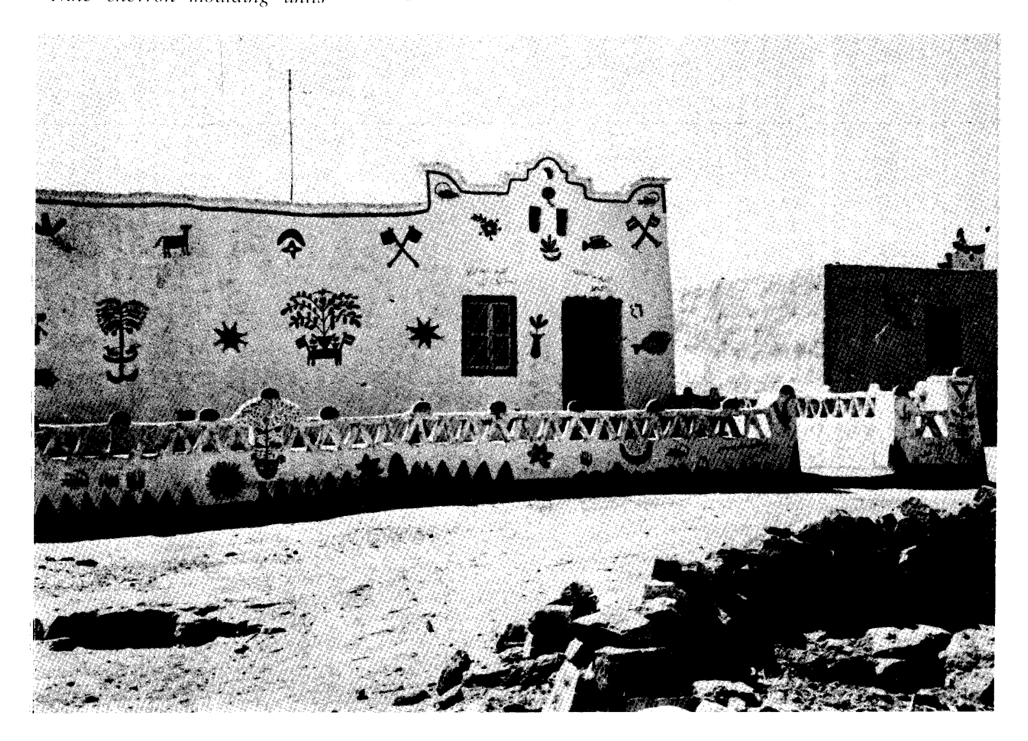
The Nubian artist's creativity is obvious in the variety of planes that allows the interplay of light and shade. Consequently, the doorway is differently viewed every hour of the day till sunset.

The third picture is for a white doorway built in the left corner of a Dahmeet house. Although small in size components are varied. Two steps raise it above the road level. Three graded levels are seen on each side of the doorway culminating in a column which rises to the height of the doorway itself. Two crowns are on top. The first is made up of four graded circular shapes coloured with natural oxides and lies on top of the fence. A similarly structured crown but with three graded circular shapes rests upon the column.

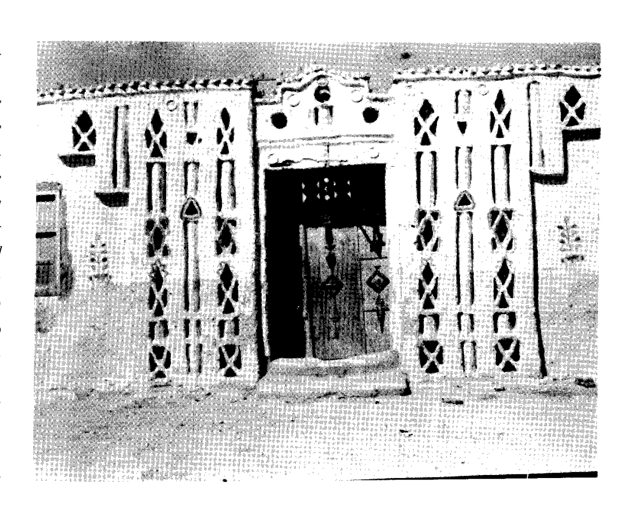
Nine chevron moulding units appear in relief on top. Above these there is a row of triangles in relief, an area that encloses three vacant circles, a wavy framework with an arch in the middle. Three squarish dolls made of soft brick rest on both columns and above the middle necklace. Twelve china plates of different diameters adorn the doorway.

This facade brings together different architectural and decorative designs whether carved or in relief. Painting in colours is also employed. A fruitful palm tree is drawn in the middle of each column. The trunk of the palm tree emerges from a circle and its leaves merge into a rhombus shape. Another decorative unit makes use of three doom palm trees bound together. The bottom of the doorway is decorated with a pattern of triangles seen on the corners of the graded columns. Interspersed among these triangles is a set of circles and rectangles. The walls of the house that are left bare reveal a precise building style that patiently makes use of small stones.

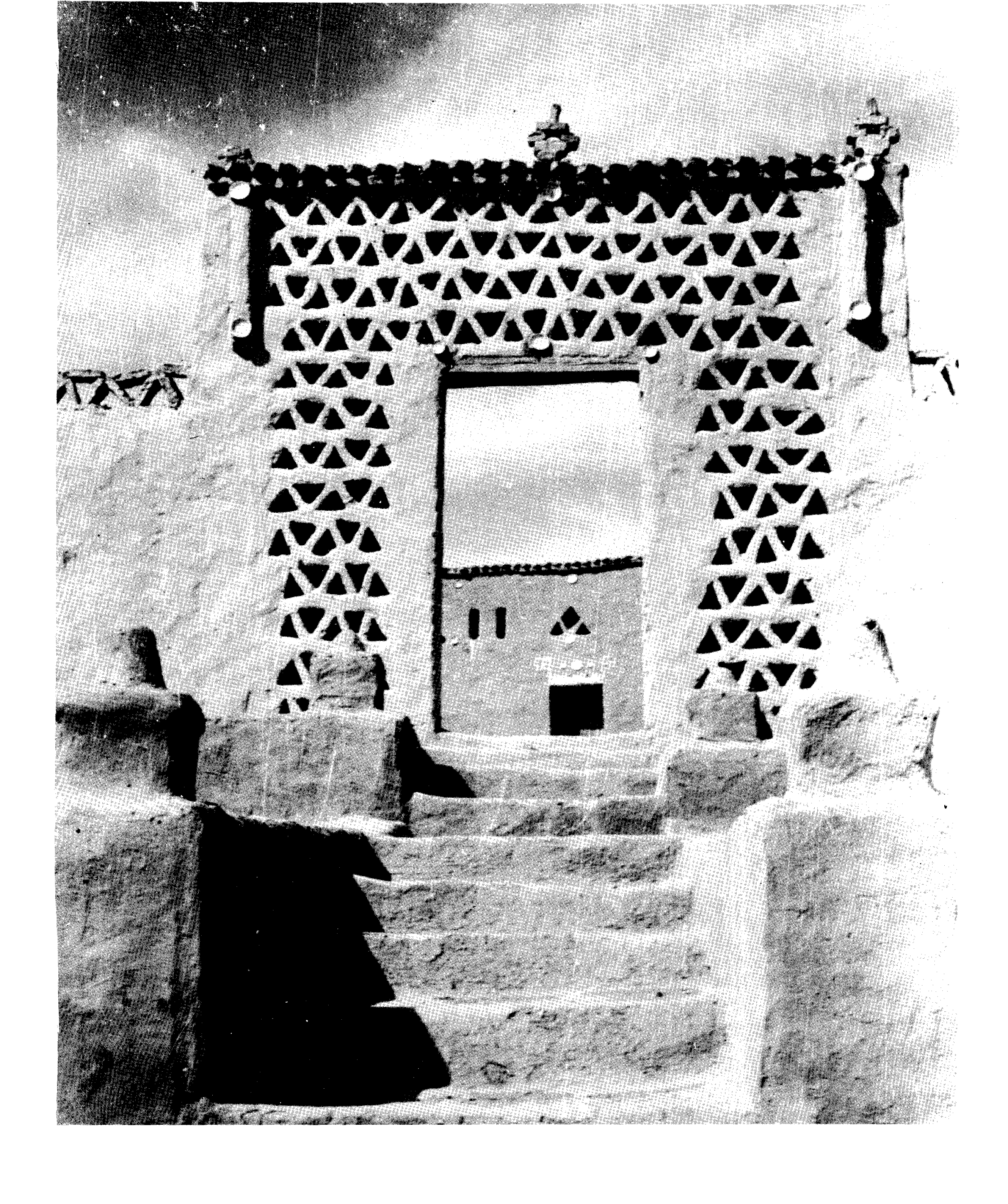
The distinct feature of the doorway architectural elements kept their beauty up to the immigration period. They serve as witness to the artistic ingenuity of al-Kunuz artist.



The fourth shows the entrance to a Dahmeei house. Seven steps elevate the house from the road level. On the right-hand side there is a single-level mastaba (a massive step), on the left-hand side a double-level one. The steps to the doorway are designed to allow maximum comfort : two small steps at the bottom are designed with a view to helping the aged and children to mount the staircase. The doorway as well as the walls of the house are painted in white. Two columns on either side of the doorway are decorated with a a vertical line where geometrical patterns - triangles, rhombuses and squares, are carved. The entrance is rectangular with an arch on top. Below the arch, there are two vacant rectangles as well as two vacant rhombuses. A squarish doll sits on top of the arch. The arch is linked to three steps leading to a cube shape from which three steps descend, a pattern that recurs along the facade of the house. Carved rectangular units can be seen beside the columns. These too are painted in white. It is to be noted that the right side of the facade that comprises the door to the guest-room is decorated with a horizontal line of carved rhombuses and triangles. The left side however is decorated with a pattern made up of a rhombus and two triangles.



That doorway is distinguished for the broad line that marks its boundaries on top. No china plates are used. However, the Nubian artist made up for the absence of china plates with a drawing of a coloured plate just above the axis of the door. He also drew two coloured Nubian fans on both sides of the columns and two lines of dots under the plate; these lines fade out towards the middle of the entrance. Left to the doorway is an ornamental palm tree. All these units are coloured with indigo.

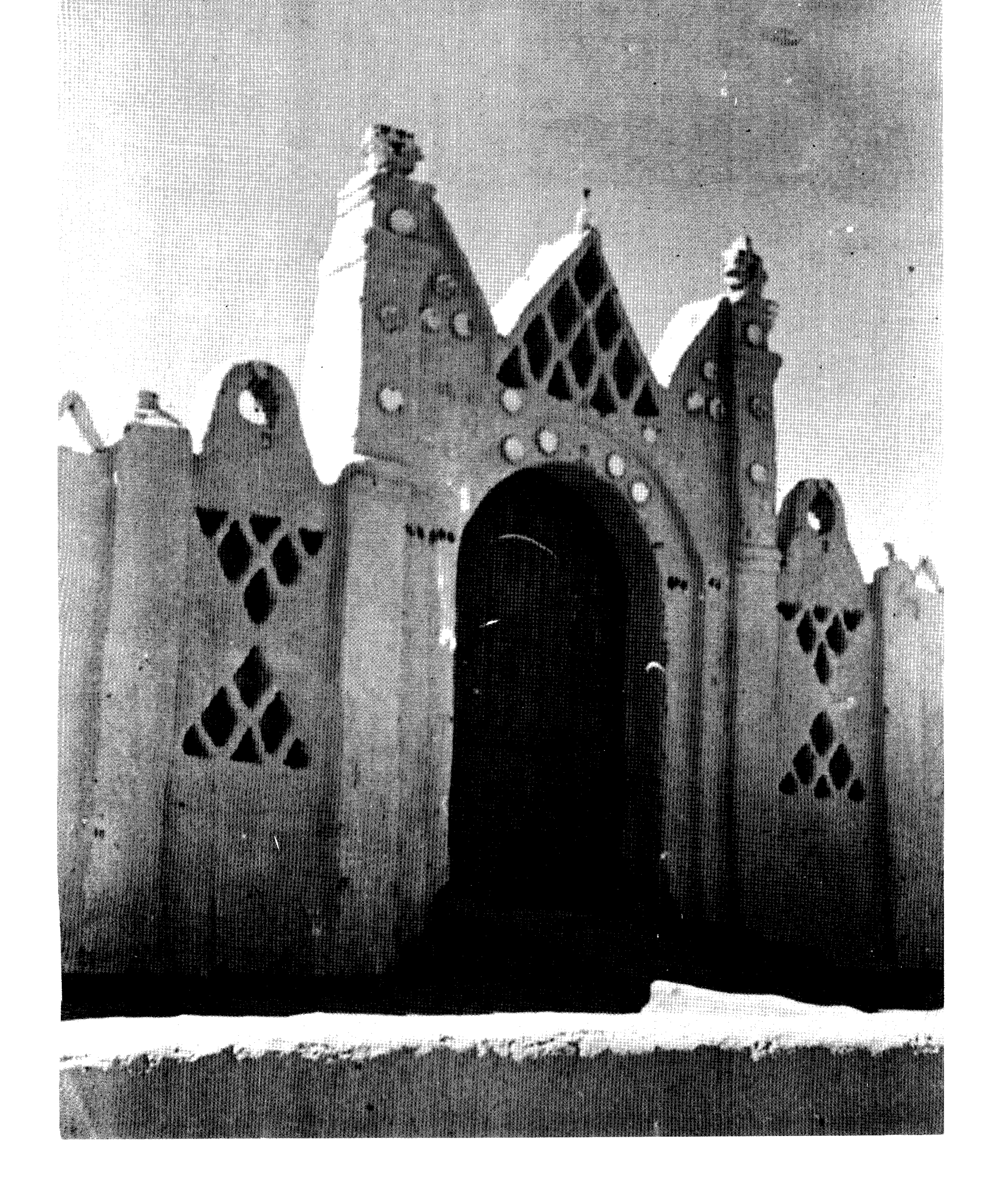


The fifth picture shows the entrance to a Dahmeet house. It is distinguished with its multi-level design. Nine steps elevate it above road level. Two levels of mastabas follow. These are surrounded with low fences built from stone and covered with mud.

Despite its simple design, this doorway is considered one of the most beautiful in Nubia. It is built on the same level as the house fences. It is right-angled with a rich surrounding pattern made up from carved equilateral triangles arranged alternately in horizontal lines. There are 182 triangles in all giving the effect of a beautiful mashrabiyya.

The principal lines of the doorway are adapted from the pylon used in Pharaonic temples. The two sides that extend higher than the fence is witness to that origin. However, Nubian features appear in the presence of two rectangular shapes to the top and bottom of each a plate is fitted. Three other smaller plates are fitted exactly above the entrance. An eighth plate can be seen in the middle of the doorway.

The doorway has an upper line made up from two parts arranged in graded protrusion against the doorway level. Each consists of a set of triangles in relief and topped with three squarish dolls two of which are intact and only the remains of the third can be seen. The top of the fence takes the shape of a line of vacant triangles thus integrating with the dominant triangular decorative pattern. It is the spontaneity of the Nubian artist that singles out this delicate and varied work.



The sixth picture is of a doorway that occupies a broad area of the facade of a Dahmeet house. The doorway used to be as high as the fence of the house. Two steps elevate the door from road level. On its sides, two broad protruding columns can be seen. Each column is decorated with three parallel vertical lines. The first and third lines are identical; they are made up from a set of carved triangles and rhombuses. The third line shows only a set of carved semi-cylinders of different lengths. Next to the protruding columns, there are other columns made up from sets of triangles and rhombuses and a semi-cylinder. The uppermost part of the door bears two vertical lines that protrude slightly. These are topped with a semi-cylinder with two circles on its sides, and a third even higher circle in the middle. The three vacant circles are equal.

Along the top of the doorway, a line of brick as well as brick triangles in relief extend all the way. There are seven china plates: one in the middle of the upper part with three plates on each side. At the very top a line that is a little below the maximum height of the doorway extends in the shape of an upper arch dominating the middle of the doorway.

The upper two-thirds of this doorway are painted in white while the bottom third displays a colour mixture of white and mud. There are also lines and sets of flower pots on both sides of the doorway. The artist who created this doorway appears to have found his inspiration in the vertical style of ornamentation common in Pharaonic tombs. Decorative units are numerous and varied and testify to the artist's ingenuity.



The seventh picture, taken in October 1963, represents the chief Egyptian architect of our time, Hassan Fathi, instructing the writer, then his student, how to take a shot of an ornamental unit on a wooden door.

The doorway features Pylon lines. Two columns are on either side. These slant and gradually end in three spearlike steps. The arch towering above the doorway is formed with five small steps in what looks like a sector of Djoser's Step Pyramid. On the uppermost side, vacant rectangles form a pattern: three big ones at the base, and three smaller ones above them culminating in a single rectangle on top.

Five china plates are fixed in a pyramid shape. There is also a line of palmtrees whose leaves intertwine. Beneath that line there are triangular units representing the waters of the Nile. Ducks are drawn in between palm trees. Below the palm tree line there are two more lines representing a set of Nubian charms and another featuring flower plots with three branched plants.

The sides of the door are decorated along their lengths with a pattern of palm trees. The lower part of the door features a set of triangles with drawings of three coloured dolls above it.

The upper area of the doorway and the side columns feature numerous single units: a tea pot and four cups drawn twice on each column, Nubian hangings, small dolls, a representation of the procession transporting the cover of al-Ka'ba to Mecca, a set of dots, and arches and circles some of which have different frameworks.

All units are drawn in white except some smaller ones. Flower-pots are painted in different colours, together with the colour of indigo.



The nineth picture reveals the idiosyncrasy of the Nubian artist. A desire for liberating his style from traditional stereotypes leads him to represent palm-trees in a different pattern. Free creation is coupled with simple execution. The facade is one of the least crowded in ornamental units in al-Arab area.

This is the doorway to an old Adendan house. Both sides in the uppermost area combine carving and quasi-Islamic mural decoration. There are also symbols drawn from the folk epic "Sayf zi Yazan".

Four uneven steps elevate the doorway from the road level. Two mastabas are on both sides of the doorway. There is a step below each mastaba functioning as a foot stool.

Two sets constitute the decoration on both sides of the doorway. A third set is seen in the uppermost area and a fourth in the arch. Decorative sets are distributed on both sides of the doorway in the uppermost area and the arch of the facade. The side sets are made up from free vertical lines where breadth decreases from bottom to top showing an Ancient Egyptian architectural influence. Age and lack of maintenance affected the lower parts of the sides. Ornamental units along these lines feature horizontally drawn semi-circles adorned with triangles, carved and in relief, circles containing crescents and stars. Vertical semi-circles enclose small triangles and strips of wavy lines representing Nile water.

The uppermost area features small rhombuses and strips of Nile water. There is a semi-circle whose circumference represents Nile water and which contains a big china plate with a crescent and a star above it. Two lions carrying swords - representing the folk hero Sayf zi Yazan - can be seen on both side. There are also rectangular units enclosing smaller china plates.

The arch is mainly a long strip of fine unit repetitive but different units of rhombuses and Nile water. In its middle a single curve houses a semi circle with a small vacant circle inside it. Two rectangular ornaments are on both sides. These are made up from square units enclosing carved vertical curves. A pointed prism towers above the rectangles and the middle curve. Ten china plates are used to adorn this doorway.

The doorway is considered among the most beautiful in Nubia. Its decoration resembles that of Nubian houses in the Sudan.





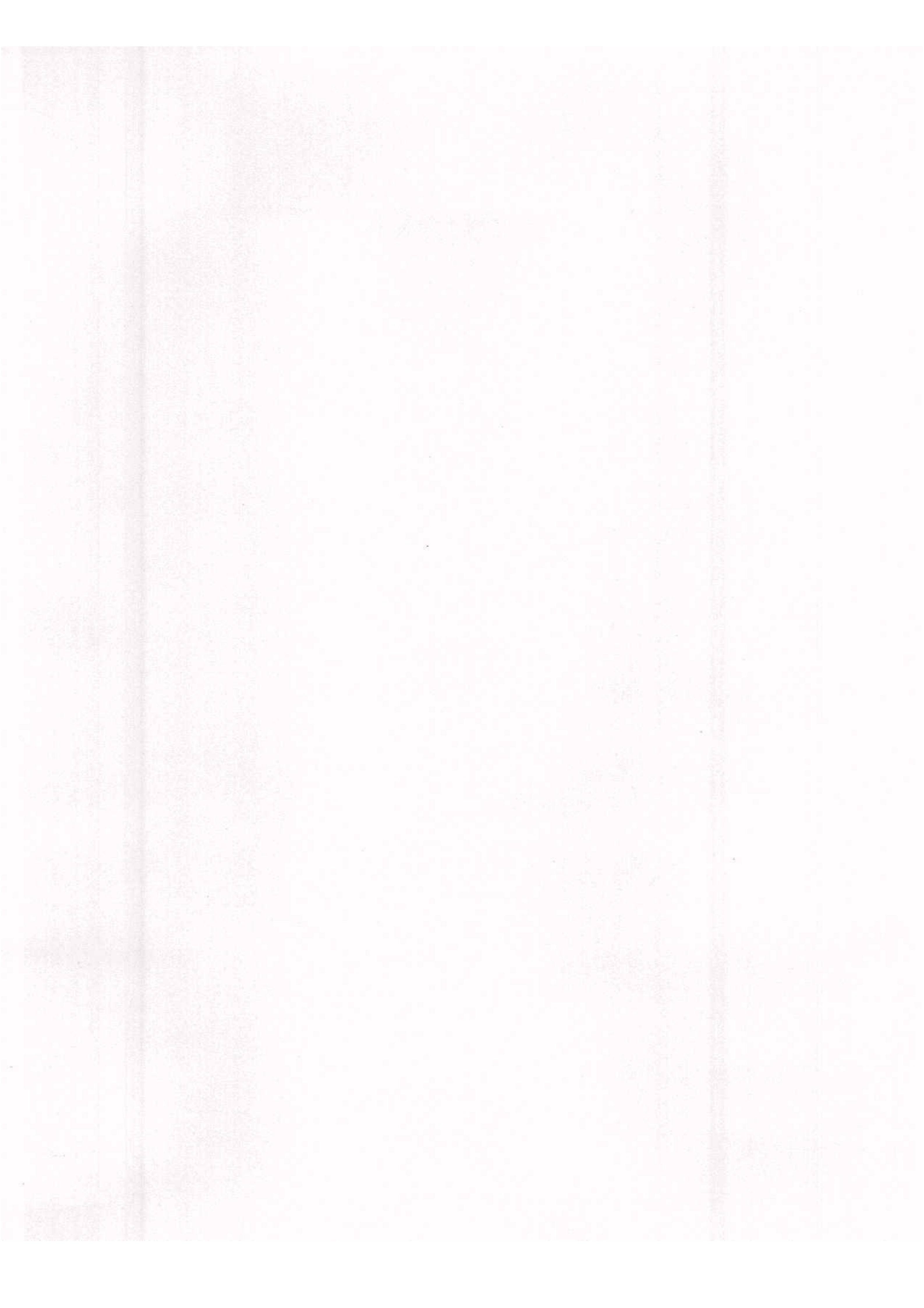
The tenth picture reveals mural decoration, both carved and in relief, from a bridal chamber in Adendan village. The decoration was executed at a later stage than the building of the house on the occasion of the marriage of one of the sons of the family. The decorative patterns used are similar to the ones presented in the previous picture. However, style varies in the presentation of the Sayf zi Yazan, the crescents, stars and other geometrical units.

The roof is thatched with wood and palm trees. Ventilation outlets are rectangular and relatively big. There are sixteen china plates in different sizes on the principal mural of the chamber. Additional triangular patterns can also be seen.

The ingenuity of the Nubian artist as revealed in this pattern consists in harmony and fine execution of various geometrical units.

HABITS AND CUSTOMS

● POPULAR CEREMONIES (AL-MAWALED) ● RELIGIOUS OCCASIONS ● MARRIAGE RITES AND CEREMONIES ● COPTIC FEASTS ●



POPULAR CEREMONIES 'AL-MAWALED'

(THE BIRTHDAYS OF HOLY MEN)

By DR. FAROUK AHMED MOSTAFA



'Ceremony' as a term is closely related to 'rituals' that usually accompany celebrations. The first term is more general than the second as it involves a great number of participants and rests upon a cultural heritage. On the other hand, 'ritual' is restricted to symbolic, religious and magical aspects.

The present essay is a study of popular ceremonies of the birthdays of holy men. It covers the following areas:

- Definition of mawaled (birthday of holy men)

- History of mawaled in Egypt.

- Types of ceremonies from both popular and ritual perspectives.

The Importance of the Moulid

Religious occasions are common in the history of nations. Ceremonies to mark these occasions persist and may outlive the original significance of the religious events. A tradition similar to the moulid was observed in Pharaonic Egypt as well as in the Christian world where such events are still related to names of saints (St. Paul in Malta, St. Sava in Yugoslavia, St. Jacob in Spain and others). Egyptian Copts celebrate the birthdays of Mar Guirgis, Mar Mina, St. Theresa and other saints. It is significant that both Copts and Muslims take part in these celebrations that stand out as national events.

The moulid does not necessarily refer to the



Decorations and flags are among the features of celebrating Ramadan (month of fasting) From the town of Akhmim in Upper Egypt

birthday of a holy man. It may as well refer to the date of his death. A case in point is Al-Sayed Al-Badawi's mawaled that are celebrated three times a year: once on the occasion of his birth, the second time on the occasion of his death, and a third time - known as 'Al-Ragabiya" which is attributed to one of his followers.

Celebrating a mouled can stretch for a week. In certain cases it may extend longer: three weeks for Al-Hussein and Al-Sayeda Zeinab mawaled in Cairo. The last night is a special event known as 'al-laila al-kabira' (the grand night) or 'al-laila al-khetamiya' (the closing night); it is usually a Thursday night.

Mouleds are observed to honour holy men and perpetuate their memory regardless of their actual birthdays which are mostly unknown.

There are two main categories of religious celebrations in Egypt. The first category includes general religious occasions: the Bairam and the greater Bairam, the Prophet's birthday, the beginning of the Hijri year, Al-Israa' wa Al-Mi'raj and mid Sha'ban. The second category includes mawaled of holy men. These mawaled may be classified in accordance with the number of people who attend them:

1. The Grand Celebrations: such as Al-Hussein and Al-Sayeda Zeinab mawaled, mawaled of holy men that belong to the 'sufi' traditions such as Al-Badawi Mouled in Tanta and Al-Dessouqi in Dessouq. A great many number of people, belonging to the rural population as well as urban dwellers, take part in these celebrations.

2. Mouleds of holy men who founded different 'sufi' traditions. These are attended by the followers of each tradition. Such mawaled serve publicity purposes for sufi traditions as well. Al-Rifa'i mouled in Cairo is an example of that kind of mawaled.

3. Nubian mawaled.

However, the above classification does not include local mawaled in villages and smaller communities limited to local inhabitants.

Mouleds also keep the memory of holy men alive from one generation to the next. They also fall into the religious pattern of a coherent community. They are occasions that call for solidarity among the members of communities. They often share in the costs of celebrations, accommodation and foods made available to all visitors.

Mouleds are also social occasions in the sense that friends are reunited and spend their leisure time enjoyably. Social and folk tradition is preserved. Moreover, mawaled promote commercial transactions and are closely related to seasons of economic prosperity, specially after selling the cotton crop.

A historical study of mawaled sheds light on their origins. Such a study generates five basic principles:

1. The Egyptian society is multi-cultural as differences exist between the culture of Ancient Egypt and that of the various Islamic ages.

2. Similarities between Egyptian ceremonies and mawaled exist. However, their functions differ throughout the ages. Whereas deifying the Pharaoh was the religious aim of ancient Egyptian ceremonies, marking a religious occasion was the aim in the Islamic era. In Fatimite Egypt, mawaled grew in number with a view to spreading Fatimite ideology and screening the turn from Sunni religious creed. Having in mind the consolidation of their political power, Fatimite rulers ingratiated themselves to Egyptians by means of setting up extravagant moulid celebrations. These celebrations continued in the times of the Ayubids and the Memelukes for different political reasons.

3. The Crusades contributed to a diminishing of various festivities that accompanied moulid celebrations in Auybid Egypt.

4. Owing to Egypt's central geographic position, Ancient Egyptian religion reached the

shores of Greece. The same geographic factor encouraged the immigration of Moroccan religious scholars, holy men and sheikhs of sufi tradition to Egypt.

5. It is difficult to distinguish between ritual and religious rites on the one hand, and the secular and folkloric aspects of celebrations in mawaled.

In Ancient Egypt, mawaled were inseparable from religion. Ancient Egyptian religion formed the essence of everyday life. It spread throughout Egypt thanks to easy transportation along the Nile that extends from the north to the south of the country. However, names of gods and religious practices vary from one place to another. Poetry and songs helped spread different ancient Egyptian beliefs whose contradictions were passed over by Egyptians.

Pharaonic Feasts

The Ancient Egyptians were keen on observing ceremonious rites in honour of their gods. There were numerous feasts for that purpose in Ancient Egypt, particularly during the time of the New Kingdom: Amoun processions, feasts of the different gods, mortuary feasts, Pharaoh's feasts (the thirtieth anniversary of his accession in particular). There were agricultural feasts as well during the harvest season and the flooding of the Nile. These feasts originally had a religious character and later on developed into grand celebrations and magnificent processions.

Historical records exist of such celebrations. One of the most important feasts in the New Kingdom celebrated the god Amoun's visit to the temple of Luxor. The myth told of Amoun's leaving Karnak to visit the goddess Moon at Luxor where he would stay for ten days. The feast itself lasted twenty four days. Details are inscribed on the walls of temples: processions of sacrificial animals, troops, music bands, four boats carried by priests to the Nile - Amoun's boat being one of them. The celebration ends in the Karnak temple where sacrifices are slaughtered.

The main features of Ancient Egyptian celebrations are therefore twofold: ritual, as the Pharaoh is deified and sacrifices are presented to the gods; and secular or folkloric, manifested in singing, dancing, and popular festivities. However, the two aspects are interrelated as dancing is performed for religious purposes.

the Origin of Egyptian Mouleds

The origin of Egyptian mawaled go back to the Ikhshidi era. Rulers and ruled shared in grand celebrations; banquets were set and all people went out to the public gardens. Christians as well as Muslims took part in these mawaled which turned to be national feasts such as Wafa' Al-Nil (celebrating the annual flooding of the Nile), Al-Nayrouz (celebrating the coming of spring) and the feast of opening the gulf.

The Arab historian, Al-Mass'udi, refers to the participation of Egypt's Copts and Muslims in celebrating Epiphany in the time of Al-Ikhsid: they all passed the day on the river banks and brought over their food, drink and musical instruments. The eve of that feast became one of the most important Egyptian celebrations.

Banquets, which made their first appearance in the time of Al-Ikhshid, had a different social and political function in the Fatimite era. They represented a means of ideological propaganda. Sumptuous banquets were given by Fatimite rulers who hoped to change Egypt's Sunni trend to Shiism. A growing number of feasts were consequently celebrated in Egypt during that era: birthdays of holy men, both Muslim and Christian, the beginning of the Hijri year, 'Ashoura (the day Al-Hussein was martyred), the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed, the birthdays of Ali bin Abi Taleb, Al-Hassan, Al-Hussein and Fatima, the birthday of the Caliph, the first day of Ragab, the first and middle day of Ramadan, Al-Nayrouz, Victory Day

(marking the Fatimite conquest of Egypt), and Maundy Thursday and Epiphany. The Fatimites introduced new feasts as well such as Ghadeer Qom (where they believed Prophet Mohammed assigned the Caliphate to Ali bin Abi-Taleb).

Exaggeration was the dominant feature of Fatimite celebrations with a view to ingratiating themselves to the Egyptians. The Arab historian, Al-Maqrizi, describes how mosques were so generously lit with torches on the first and middle days of Ragab and Sha'ban that Cairo seemed to bathe in dazzling daylight throughout the night.

Fatimite Caliphs used to take part in magnificent celebrations amidst joyful crowds and decorations. Al-Qalaqashandi mentions four 'grand processions' in the beginning of the Hijri year and the three last Fridays in Ramadan, and refers to all other processions as the 'abridged ones'.

The moulid procession followed an established order: the representative of the Caliph leads the processions on horseback accompanied by thirty lesser representatives, sheikhs and reciters of the Holy Quran who praise God and pray for the Caliph. All members of the processions are on horseback and hold lit candles. The procession begins from the Hall of the Chief Judge and ends at Bab Al Zomorod where the Caliph receives it. The final destination becomes over-crowded as everybody strives to catch a glimpse of the Caliph. Speeches are given by religious scholars who compete in eloquence. The speeches finished, the Caliph looks upon the crowd from above while one of his representatives salutes the crowd and dismisses them. The procession then returns while banquets are given and money and sweets distributed.

Music and singing played a prominent part in Fatimite Mouleds. Male and female singers were greatly appreciated by statesmen and men of affluent means. Cairo witnessed public artistic performances on the gulf banks; but these were later cancelled by the Caliph Al-Hakim because of their deterioration to lewdness and depravity.

Contrary to Fatimite extravagance, Ayubid celebrations were frugal in keeping with the 'Jihad" spirit against the Crusades and because of the mounting expenses of warfare. Moreover, the Ayubids were critical of the depravity of certain Fatimite festivities while the return to Sunni Islam necessitated the cancellation of shi'ie feasts as well. An alteration of Ashoura feast from a day of grief to a day of joy is significant.

The Memeluke era witnessed a flourishing in feasts and celebrations owing to the economic prosperity of the time. The return to extravagant festivities was also a consequence of the political situation as these festivities diverted the people from dwelling upon the foreign identity of their rulers and the collapse of the Islamic Caliphate in Morocco. Religious feasts were sumptuously observed, banquets were set up and alms were given to the poor.

The Memeluke era also witnessed a growing cult of holy men and sheiks thought to intercede with God on behalf of the people. Supernatural deeds, known as 'karamat' were often attributed to them. Consequently, the birthdays of those sheiks were awarded the greatest of care in their native towns. Some of these mawaled were celebrated under the auspices of Sultan Qait Bay himself.

Public interest in these 'mawaled' was so enormous that it was said that the number of participants in Al-Sayed Al-Badawi's moulid exceeded the number of pilgrims to Mecca.

Besides festivities, ritual constitutes an important component of the celebration of mawaled. The practice of ritual, that takes the form of repetitive actions cast in a religious pattern, merges with the secular activities of the participants.

Thus both ritual and secular aspects co-exist inseparably to signify in terms of performance, be it simple or complex, certain religious beliefs. Herskovits pointed out the impor-

tance of studying ritual in uncovering religious beliefs.

Rituals of mawaled are deeply rooted in a belief in the supernatural power wielded by holy men and sheikhs. Not only do followers of these 'men of God' hold this belief but also common people who may trace their success in life to their intercession with God on their behalf. Such is the strength of that belief that followers of a sheikh observe the ritual of ablution before taking part in ceremonies marking his moulid. Ablution with water signifies cleanliness as well as the purification of man's soul. As a result, followers feel they are spiritually prepared to get closer to the shrines of those holy men.

Mouled ritual then consists of three elements: the visit to the shrine, al-zikr (reciting the name of God) and the procession.

A visit to the shrine of a 'wali' (a holy man) involves honouring him and appealing to him for support so that the visitor may come back the following years. The enclosure where the tomb lies is the scene of a number of ritual acts. Followers show submission and humility as they believe the wali watches them. They also engage in 'du'a' (asking God's blessings) which they feel confident God will grant as they address Him in a place made holy by the presence of the 'wali's' tomb.

Visits to the shrine take place all through the moulid days. Visits per day may amount to five times to coincide with the number of prayers performed in the mosque. Ritual statements while entering and leaving the enclosure of the 'wali's' tomb are observed. Upon entering the enclosure, Al-Fatiha (the first sura in the Holy Quran) is read. The visitors then honour Prophet Mohammed while raising their hands to their chests and lowering them twice, then raising them to their heads. Upon leaving, visitors have to obtain the wali's permission to leave and beg him to allow them a chance to repeat the visit in the coming years.

It is noteworthy that no restrictions are set for women visitors who visit the shrine side by side with men and children.

As for Coptic mawaled, visits are paid to the shrines of saints, and to certain parts of churches where visitors stand before icons and paintings. They also buy models of these icons and keep them in the belief that those saints have supernatural powers to perform miraculous deeds.

Muslim 'zikr' is a major ritual performed in mawaled. The names of God are recited as well as the names of His prophets. There are different formulas of zikr: praising God (God is great, Praise be to God, God is Almighty), 'du'a" or even addressing God with His fair names and honouring the Prophet. 'Awrad' (suras from the Quran or religious scripts written by eminent scholars) are also recited.

'Zikr' may be recited to the accompaniment of music to attract greater number of people who may later on join the ranks of the followers. The performance of zikr consists in the harmony, orchestrated by the leading sheikhs, in chanting and swinging to and fro.

' Zikr' is performed outside mosques in make-shift halls or tents. Popular singers of religious songs are invited and loud-speakers are used. Some groups allow participation of women while others do not.

Processions are part of the ritual ceremonies in mawaled. These are arranged by 'sufi' groups with a view to asserting the existence of a strong and coherent Muslim community. 'Sufi' processions go round the streets in a procession praising God for His blessings. It is thought that such a tradition goes back to the Prophet's victorious entry into Mecca accompanied by his followers who praised and glorified God.

State authorities may share in these celebrations, specially on the Prophet's birthday. Policemen on horseback or on the march precede


دكتور
صموئيل فوزي بشاي
نوفوتيه الاقصر
الاقصر



Markets and entertainment



the procession in which representatives of local authorities and the 'sufi' groups take part. Organisation of birthdays of 'walis' are left to leaders of 'sufi' groups who organise the march of the procession. Participating groups march in the order of their power and number of followers. The march moves according to a plan, usually it starts from one of the principal squares in town and ends at the wali's shrine.

Dramatic elements are prominent in processions: music, for instance, is played by police bands in expression of joy and happiness. The 'wali's' caliph or successor also rides a horse in the attire of religious scholars winning the admiration of the crowd. Each group has a religious singer, and musical instruments are used to set the rhythm.

Christian saints are also celebrated by marching processions that chant hymns round the church of the honoured saint. The procession then moves towards the icon of the saint inside the church. Children to be baptised take part in the procession wearing white clothes embroidered with crosses. Popular musical instruments and some brass instruments are used.

Folkloric Elements

Oral transmission is responsible for transferring a nation's folkloric heritage from one generation to the next, and guarding this heritage as part and parcel of the nation's culture.

Folkloric aspects of moulid celebrations may be summed up in folk sings, folk music, folk proverbs, folk tales and folk games.

Folk Songs

Oral transmission keeps the memory of these songs. Such songs are sung by ear as no written record is available. Folk songs do not require trained voices as they are communal in nature, and consequently everybody can take part in singing them. However, individual voices marked with their beauty do exist as well as sophisticated recorded folk songs.

Authors of folk songs are anonymous. However, writers of religious songs may be recognised but may not be well-known to the public.

In Individually sung folk songs, rhythm and rhyme play a little role in musical composition. It is the performance of the singer that counts. These singers give themselves the right to interpolate their songs with phrases from some well-known songs to avoid boring the audience.

Folk songs, sung in mawaled, may contain wise sayings and proverbs that express the spirit of the Egyptian society and its cherished values such as patience, belief in fate and respect for other people's privacy. A 'mawal' (an extemporaneous song) is usually embedded in a folk-song to relieve the musicians for a while and to appeal to the tastes of the audience.

Folk troupes are responsible for entertaining visitors of mawaled. Make-shift halls are set up and tickets for the show are sold. The songs that these troupes perform incorporate names of walis side by side with a colloquial and peculiar diction.

Folk musicians extemporize as they perform their own pieces. They also handle compositions by other composers freely. Sources of musical inspiration can be traced back to the Quran, al-azan (the call for prayer) and religious songs. 'Al-Mawal', as aforesaid, is essentially an extemporaneous art.

Folk music is structurally repetitive and depends on oral transmission as folk musi-



turns at swings. Also 'tahtib' (fencing with wooden cudgels) to the accompaniment of the 'mizmar' (a wind instrument) is also common in 'mawaled'.

Upper Egyptian 'mawaled' are characterized by horse dances to the tunes of music. Competitions are set up and participants show off their talents in horse riding. 'Al-tarda' is another game in which a chase is carried out by two horsemen. The winner manages to touch his rival with a long spear.

'Mawaled' preserve the cultural and social identity of folk tradition and pass it on to the next generations. They thrive upon the folk heritage of a community and contribute, at the same time, to enriching it as creativity in all artistic activities involved in such occasions is greatly encouraged.



Games and shooting for children

cians play by ear and may easily shift the tone of their singing. Musical instrument, though primitive, such as 'al-rababa' (a string instrument), 'al-nay' (a wind instrument), 'al-tabl', 'al-defouf', 'al-tarat' (percussion instruments) have a moving effect on the audience. Lutes and violins may also be used.

Visitors as well as musicians come together in mawaled where they all enjoy artistic creativity: visitors appreciate singing and performing while musicians perfect their individual talents.

PROVERBS

Proverbs depend on oral transmission of folk knowledge. They are concise and involve well-contrived metaphors. As proverbs originate from all classes in society and reflect day to day experiences, they are an excellent source of study for sociologists and anthropologists who trace the social and moral development in their societies.

'Mawaled' occasioned the use of many proverbs that invite researchers to delve deep behind their sense. For instance, "the caliph rode away and the moulid closed down" is a proverb that may literally mark the end of the moulid and consequently the chance to receive the blessings and favours of the caliph. However, a deeper level of meaning applies to life in general : "the moulid closed down" may refer to the failure to achieve an aim or the loss of a chance. It may also be used to reprimand late comers whose presence is no longer needed or to encourage others to put in their efforts before "the moulid closes down".

The relationship between public and 'walis' or elders in general, characterized by respect and veneration, is expressed in the proverb that says, "those who step on the thresholds (of the 'wali's' shrine) will not be disappointed."

FOLK TALES

Folk tales is the most common type of folk literature. They are related in' mawaled' by 'rawis' (folk singers) to the accompaniment of a 'rababa'. They have a powerful and moving effect on their audience who generally look upon them as moral anecdotes.

The 'walis' in these tales have supernatural powers. Some of them abstain from food for long periods of time in their mountain caves. In one of the tales, Al-Sayed Ahmed Al-Badawi can hear the entreaties of the honourable Khadra imprisoned in Christian lands and manages to infuse power in Abdel-Al, one of his faithful followers, to rescue her and bring her back on a magic carpet.

Humour features in folk tales as well. Al-Dessouki hides between the eyes of the prophet to test Al-Badawi's abilities to reveal the unknown. When Al-Badawi fails to find Al-Dessouki in the "seven earths" and the "seven skies" as the tale goes, he asks for the prophet's assistance and eventually finds Al-Dessouki's hiding place. It is this tale that gave Al-Dessouki his name "Abou Al-Einein" (The wali of the Eyes).

Tales about 'walis' seek to establish their supernatural powers and are meant to entertain the visiting public and enhance the prestige of the story-teller who benefitted from the wali's 'karamat' (supernatural deeds).

FOLK GAMES

Folk games serve for entertainment. They depend upon simple activities that require the least of equipment such as pulling, dragging, running, jumping, balancing and hide and seek. Chance as well as efficiency play a role in making such games interesting.

Grown-ups as well as children take part in shooting and games of chance. Children take



Victoria Is a Mean of Celebrating Al - Mawlid

turns at swings. Also 'tahtib' (fencing with wooden cudgels) to the accompaniment of the 'mizmar' (a wind instrument) is also common in 'mawaled'.

Upper Egyptian 'mawaled' are characterized by horse dances to the tunes of music. Competitions are set up and participants show off their talents in horse riding. 'Al-tarda' is another game in which a chase is carried out by two horsemen. The winner manages to touch his rival with a long spear.

'Mawaled' preserve the cultural and social identity of folk tradition and pass it on to the next generations. They thrive upon the folk heritage of a community and contribute, at the same time, to enriching it as creativity in all artistic activities involved in such occasions is greatly encouraged.

RELIGIOUS OCCASIONS

BY DR. HAFEZ AL-ASWAD



Religious occasions are characterized by folkloric elements some of which go back to pre-Islamic times. These elements, however, may change in keeping with the passing of time. A folkloric study consequently unveils non-Islamic elements that found their way into celebrating religious occasions; it also reveals the factors that distinguish a Muslim society, such as the Egyptian one, from other Muslim societies.

The present article discusses religious occasions in order of their occurrence in the Hijri year:

1. Ashura

Muslim Sunnis and Shi'is celebrate Ashura' on 10 Moharrem, the first month of the Hijri year. The occasion marks the martyrdom of Al-Hussein bin Ali bin Abi Taleb, the prophet's grandson, in the battle of Karbela'.

Egyptian Muslims, mainly Sunni, celebrate Ashoura' by reading verses from The Holy Qur'an, singing religious songs, and preparing rich foods that include meat, chicken and pheasants. Social and family commitments are observed on that day. The bridegroom-to-be pays a visit to his future in-laws and presents 'al-musem' (a gift) to his fiancee. This is usually a contribution to the setting up of their home.

In urban centres, particularly Cairo and

Marketo in the moulid of "ELSAID ELBADAWI"

Alexandria, celebrating Ashura' is marked with lighting coloured lamps in the densely-populated old quarters. Sweets are prepared, specially the Ashura dish basically prepared from wheat grain and milk, raisins, nuts and ground coconut. Using wheat grain in Ashura may be related to a popular belief in the blessing drawn from the raw material of our daily bread.

Ashura in predominantly Shi'ie countries such as Iran and Iraq is celebrated in ritual performances that recall the martyrdom of Al-Hussein, and his burial. Expression of public grief permeates these performances.

2. Al-Mawled Al-Nabawi Al-Sharif

(The Prophet's Birthday)

Al-Mawled Al-Nabawi is celebrated on 12 Rabie' Al-Awal. It is an occasion marked with greatest of festivities as the counterpart of Christmas in the west. Children are offered sweets and gifts. They are at the centre of the celebration as they stand for the new birth of a better future. Houses, shops and streets are decorated with flags and lights.

Preparations are underway in the beginning of Rabie' Al-Awal. Make-shift halls and tents are set up for selling sweets. Models of Al-Ka'ba (the holy mosque in Mecca) are made and hung by ropes across the streets. In the countryside, a camel, known as 'nagrazan' is lavishly decorated with coloured cloths. Two big drums decorated with small coloured flags are placed on its hump. As the drums are beaten, children dance and follow 'al-nagrazan' wherever it goes. The camel-rider stops occasionally and calls out for the prophet's sustenance and is tipped by shopkeepers and passers-by.

Sufi processions organized by followers of sufi groups are another manifestation that marks the celebration of Al-Mawled Al-Nabawi. The Sufis march in two parallel lines behind a leader. Sometimes a band of musicians playing wind and percussion instruments precedes the procession. The sufi march begins after the last prayers of the day and goes through the main streets of the town. Religious songs in praise of the prophet, 'walis' (holy men) and sufi leaders are sung.

Sufi processions and 'nagrazan' begin on the first day of Rabie' Al-Awal and end in 'Al-laila Al-kabira' (the grand night) or 'Al-laila Al-khetamiya' (the last night), known also as 'al-maulid's zaffa' (the procession).

The 'zaffa' usually begins after midday prayers. Taking part in it are: officers on horseback followed by lines of privates, a sufi procession and processions of members of different professions holding up their signs. Horse-drawn carts and trucks follow carrying hundreds of people who take part in the procession while crowds of people take to the streets to watch the 'zaffa'.

In the evening, a spacious hall is set up for celebrating 'Al-laila al-kabira'. Religious songs are heard through loud-speakers. These tell of the prophet's life and particularly of his birth and the miracles that accompanied it.

Besides richly prepared foods such as meat and pheasants, sweets are commonly prepared. These are of two kinds: hard and soft. Hard sweets are made of peanuts, chick-peas and sesame in circular or rectangular shapes. Soft sweets are moulded in the shape of a 'arousa' (a doll), a horse, a cock, a mosque, a ship, or a plane depending on the social environment.

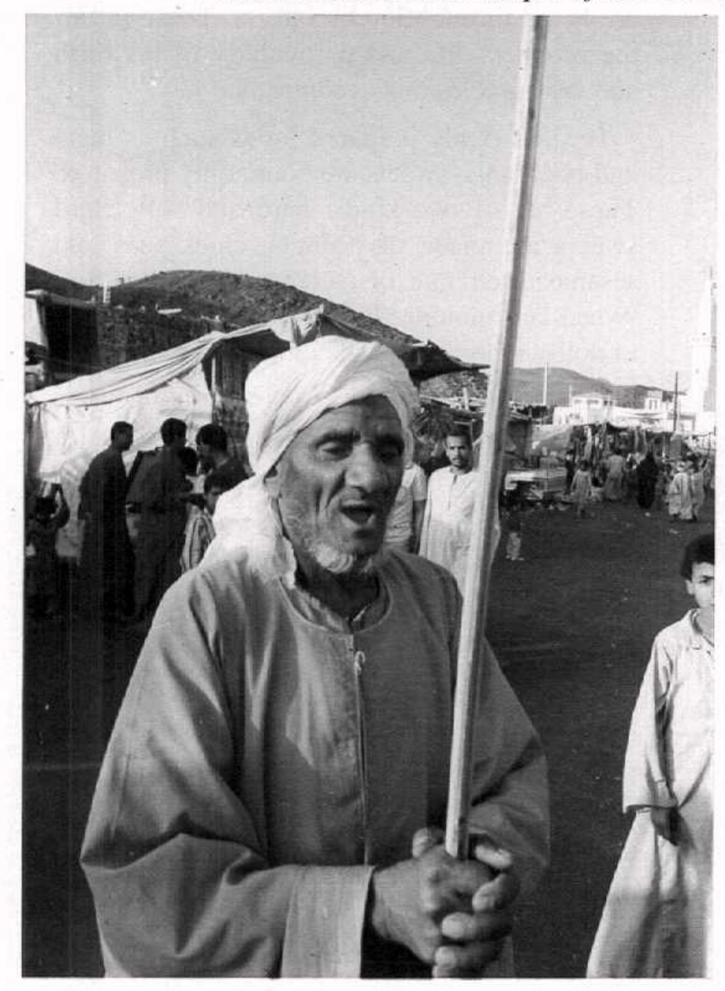
3. Al-Israa' Wa Al-Mi'raj

The eve of 27 Ragab is an occasion for celebrating Al-Israa' (the prophet's journey to Jerusalem) and Al-Mi'raj (his ascent to heaven). Lights and flags decorate the streets, sweets are sold in an atmosphere of joy and festivity.

Few folkloric symbols are attached to this occasion which marks a purely abstract event that invites contemplation. Al-Barraq (the unearthly beast that the prophet rode on his journey) , in particular, dominates folk imagina-



Decorations on the mosque of Sidi Youssuf Abu - Haggag at Luxor



One of the Soufi groups takes part in the celebrations by carrying signs and flags .

tion. Al-Israa' wa Al-Mi'raj recalls God's will that made it possible for the prophet to transcend the limitations of time and space and to appear in the divine presence to receive God's command of the five prayers.

The Eve of Mid-Sha'ban

The eve of mid-Sha'ban is an occasion celebrated in a manner similar to the eve of Al-Israa' wa Al-Mi'raj. It is related to a belief in the existence of a heavenly evergreen tree whose leaves represent the living. Each leaf bears the name of a person, his life history and his good and bad deeds. A leaf falling off the tree indicates the death of the person whose name is inscribed on it. It is also believed that man's deeds are presented before God once a year in that night and that repentance in this night leads to God's forgiveness. The eve of mid-Sha'ban consequently is particularly celebrated with 'du'a" (asking God for His blessings and favours).

Eid Al-Fitr

Eid Al-Fitr (the feast that follows Ramadan's feast) is rich in folkloric elements. It lasts from three to five days during which Muslims celebrate the joys of life and remember their dead as well.

Preparations for the feast begin in the last fifteen or ten days of Ramadan. New clothes are bought, particularly for children. Cookies are prepared and houses are stocked with peanuts, fenugreek, lupine, nuts and dates in accordance with the availability of financial means.

Celebrations begin early on the first day with the feast prayers. After performing their prayers, men usually go in groups to visit the graves of their relatives where they read verses from the Holy Qur'an. Afterwards they return home and exchange feast visits, known as 'mu'ayadat'. As for women, they go visiting the graves as early as daybreak before the prayers, though some of them go after the prayers. They take with them cookies and fruits and 'rahma' (special kind of bread) to give to the poor and reciters of the Qur'an who read verses so that their dead would lie in peace. Women dress in black as a sign of mourning but on their return home they change into new, colourful clothes. They, however, keep their black clothes in the case of the recent death of a relative. In such a case, women do not make cookies or offer them to visitors.

It is noteworthy that visiting graves and preparing special foods go back to Ancient Egyptian times. The feast of the valley in Ancient Thebes was held in the graveyards to keep the memory of the dead alive. Egyptians seem committed to a consciousness of death even while enjoying the pleasures of life.

Feast cookies is a special kind of cake prepared in different sizes. Cookies are either hard or soft. Hard cookies take the shape of rings, but soft cookies take several shapes: rings, circles, triangles or squares, and are stuffed with dates or turkish delight. They are beautifully decorated with fine designs and covered with icing powder.Other kinds of cookies, such as 'ghorayeba', are prepared. All cookies are home-made but are sent to be baked at bakeries.

In villages and densely populated old quarters of towns, the newly-wed receive a gift of rice, sugar, tea, eggs and chicken from the bride's family in Eid Al-Fitr. Bridegrooms-to-be present their fiancees with valuable gifts. 'Al-Idiya' is a sum of money given to children who spend some of it on many means of entertainment available in Eid such as swings, al-aragoz (Punch and Judy), sunduq' al-donya (peep show). Everywhere children dressed in their best are seen enjoying the feast.

On the first day of Eid Al-Fitr meat and vegetables are served. But on the second and third days popular meals such as fish, salted fish, beans and onions are preferred.

6. Eid Al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice)

Eid Al-Adha is the feast of sacrifice and it

coincides with the performance of Haj (the pilgrimage to Mecca). The feast begins on 10 Zu Al-Hijja and last five days. Preparations for Eid Al-Adha start early after Eid Al-Fitr. Well-to-do people buy a ram or a sheep, known as 'kharuf al-cid' and keep it in the courtyard after adorning its neck with coloured ribbons to indicate that it is to be sacrificed in the feast.

One day before the feast, known as 'al-waqfa' (the pilgrims' stand on mount Arafat), children sing a popular song:

The feast is tomorrow
We will celebrate
And slaughter Sheikh Sayed (the sheep)
We'll send you to the slaughter house
And cook you in the big pot.

Celebrations are very much the same as those of Eid Al-Fitr except for the sacrifice. Also Eid Al-Adha witnesses less festivities than Eid Al-Fitr.

The sacrifice is slaughtered after the feast prayers. It is divided into three parts; one part goes to the poor, the second goes to relatives and friends and the third for the sacrificers themselves. Afterwards, men and women visit the graves of their dead, distribute 'rahma' and recite 'Al-Fatiha' (the opening sura of the Holy Qur'an).

On the first day of Eid Al-Adha, 'fatta' (pieces of bread soaked in soup with small pieces of meat) is served. 'Fatta' is also prepared with a topping of rice and bigger pieces of meat in lunch.

Eid Al-Adha is also related to the celebration of pilgrimages. Two weeks before the journey to Mecca, well-to-do people give a banquet for the poor. Relatives, neighbours and friends are invited. Religious songs that centre on the pilgrimage are sung. A white flag is set up on top of the house which is painted in white. Drawing of Al-Ka'ba, a camel, an airplane and a ram are painted on the walls of the house. "An accepted pilgrimage and forgiven sins" is also written.

On the outset of their jounrey, pilgrims are seen off with manifestations of joy in what seems to be a wedding procession, known as 'zaffa'. Relatives, neighbours and friends join in the procession that accompanies the pilgrims to the railway station. The procession is followed by women who carry palm leaves and sing folk songs related to that occasion.

COPTIC FEASTS

BY COUNSELLOR
WILLIAM SOLYMAN QELADA



The Coptic era in Egypt extends from the middle of the first century to the middle of the seventh century A.D. It is then that the principal Coptic feasts originated. More feasts were celebrated afterwards marking significant events in Coptic history.

The advent of Christianity to Egypt was contemporaneous with the period of Roman occupation. It is a period marked with religious, social, linguistic and ethnic separation between the Roman rulers and the ruled Copts. The separation persisted even after Egypt became part of the Byzantine empire. The persecution that started under the pagan Romans continued under Byzantine rule. However, the Egyptian people had a singularly individual vision of their identity and consequently took refuge in their Christian faith and their national institution, the Coptic Church, against foreign incursions. The Coptic Church - the oldest popular institution in Egypt - was founded by St. Mark the Apostle, author of the second Gospel. The independent status of the Coptic Church guaranteed a collective Egyptian consciousness and made Egyptians look forward to an independent homeland. Moreover, the Coptic congregation found in their church a framework for their creative activities.

It is noteworthy that Christianity introduced a belief in a Living God who is an embodiment of absolute love. God's unlimited love is seen in the Incarnation whereby God's logos be-



Church of Saint Domiana (EKHMIM)



comes man who suffers unto death by crucifixion to bear upon himself the sins of mankind. However, being stronger than death, He rose from the dead making it possible for whoever believes in him to share in His divine nature and be resurrected.

Consequently, the Coptic consciousness holds dear the sign of the cross. It is the counterpart of the Ankh, an ancient Egyptian round-headed cross that symbolizes life and that is only presented to Kings. The Christian cross, on the other hand, is offered to all as Christian rituals, as a whole, regard believers - the partakers of the divine nature of Christ - as Kings. A crown is even placed on the head of the baptised, after a ritual representing the death and resurrection of Christ is administered to each Christian child. The New Testament thus rightly refers to Christ making Kings of those who believe. No wonder then that the Egyptian peasants welcomed the Christian faith that infused them with a sense of their own worth.

Coptic art is essentially a folk art. It is probably the earliest art that inclines towards the life of the people. Previously, the arts of Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia were devoted to the glorification of Kings and rulers who patronized artists and dictated their will upon them. Folk art did not exist then except as a warped imitation of the official artistic trends. Such was the strong bond between authority and art that the latter suffered during periods of deterioration.

The principal Coptic feasts celebrate the person of Jesus and certain events of His life. Other feasts celebrate distinguished followers of Jesus throughout the ages. The Church fixed the dates of feasts according to the Coptic calendar that goes back to Pharaonic times. It is the same calendar used nowadays by Egyptian peasants for their agricultural activities.

Coptic feasts may be classified into three groups: Christ's feasts; the Virgin Mary's feasts; and Saints and Martyrs' feasts.

Christ's feasts are either major ones celebrating the principal events in his life or minor ones recalling less important events:

The Major Feasts of Christ

1. The Annunciation(29 Baramhat - 27 March)

The Annunciation commemorates the good tidings of the conception and birth of Christ, brought by Gabriel to the Virgin Mary. It is celebrated nine months (the period of pregnancy) before the birth of Christ.

2. Christmas (29 Keyak - 7 January)

The birth of Christ is celebrated on the at day. Prayers are held in churches till midnight. A 43 vegetarian fast precedes Christmas. On their return home from church, Christians break their fast as a variety of foods, prepared during the previous day, is served.

3. Epiphany (11 Tuba, 19 January)

Epiphany commemorates the baptism of Christ in the Jordan river at the hands of John the Baptist as well as the beginning of Christ's mission. Night prayers are held in churches on the occasion of the Epiphany and a three day fast precedes the feast.

It is a feast closely related to water. A basin containing Nile water is blessed by the priests who then wet the foreheads of the congregation using a piece of cloth soaked in the water. In former times tanks, where the congregation would plunge, were used. However, the practice was abolished because of the disorder and noise it engendered.

Medieval historians described the celebration of Epiphany on the banks of the Nile. Copts as well as Muslims shared in these celebrations. Al-Mass'oudi, an Arab historian, describes the festivities during the reign of Al-Ikhshid Mohammed Bin Taghk; people flock to the Nile banks carrying candles and torches. They bring with them their food and drink and musical instruments. Al-Mass'oudi believes the Epiphany to be "the most joyful night of the year as people stay up late and dive in the waters of the Nile in the belief that precaution from disease is thus acquired. On their return from churches, Copts eat taro,oranges and mandarins.

4. Palm Sunday

(The seventh Sunday of the Grand Fast)

It is one of the most popular Coptic feasts. It

commemorates the event - retold by all Gospel writers - of the entry of Christ into Jerusalem. He came meekly riding an ass. Many people spread their garments in his way while others cut down branches and strewed them in his way. The people cried out when he reached the Mount of Olives: "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord".

As early as Saturday evening, Copts go to their churches carrying palm leaves, olive branches and roses and singing beautiful hymns. Until recently, processions would go through the streets of towns and villages on Sunday eve.

5. The Resurrection

(The Sunday that follows the Passion of Christ)

It is the greatest and oldest of Christian feasts. Christians commemorate the resurrection of Christ early on Easter Sunday. A fifty five day fast precedes that feast. Churches offer the feast mass on Sunday even till after midnight. A representative simulation of the Resurrection is acted out in the churches. The lights are turned off in the church and the door to the altar is closed, with some priests and sextons inside, to resemble the sealed tomb where Christ was buried. The church priest cries from within - as did the angel - "Christ has risen" three times. The priest then asks who the Lord is and one of the sextons answers "He is the powerful Lord". The door of the altar is then forced open and lights are turned on. Music celebrating joy and triumph sounds and a procession goes round the church holding candles, flags and the Resurrection icon.

Such is the importance of the Resurrection that the church commemorates it on a weekly basis each Sunday.

6. The Ascension Day

(the fortieth day after the Resurrection)

According to "The Acts of the Apostles," Christ appeared to his disciples for forty days after his Resurrection then he ascended to heaven. The church celebrates the Ascension on the Thursday that marks the fortieth day after the Resurrection.

7. The Pentecost

(The fiftieth day after the Resurrection)

This feast commemorates the Holy Ghost's descent upon the disciples of Christ, ten days after the Ascension day.

Minor Feasts of Christ

1. The Circumcision Feast

(6 Tuba - 15 January)

It is a feast that commemorates the circumcision that Jesus, as a Jew, underwent when he was eight days old. The even is told in the gospel of St. Luke.

2. The Wedding in Cana of Galilee

(13 Tuba - 22 January)

The wedding in Cana is an event related by St. John in his gospel. Jesus and his mother were invited to the wedding. As the wine ran out and the hosts were embarrassed, Mary asked Jesus for help. Jesus responded by turning water kept in jugs to wine which was judged the best by all present.

3. Jesus' Entry into the Temple

(18 Amshir - 16 February)

This feast commemorates the baby Jesus' first entry into the Temple. On the occasion of the birth of a male, Jewish law stipulates that a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons are sacrificed. After the sacrifice was presented, the baby Jesus was received by Simeon, described in the gospel of St. Luke as "just and devout". It had been revealed to Simeon that "he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26). As soon as he saw Jesus, he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word." (Luke 2:29).

4. Maundy Thursday

(The day that precedes Good Friday)

On that same day, one day before the crucifixion, Jesus came together with his disciples for the Last Supper, thus instituting the sacrament of the Eucharist practised by churches to our day.

It was on that same day when Jesus set an example of modesty to his disciples by wash-

ing their feet, saying, "Know ye what I have done to you ? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well: for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you ... If you know these things, happy are ye if you do them" (John 13:12-17). Thus, part of the day's ceremonies is the priest's washing the feet of their congregation.

Al-Maqrisi records in his history that Egyptians in general call that day Lentils Thursday because Christians cook lentils on it. He also mentions that the Fatimites used to distribute five hundred dinars among state officials and says that Lentils Thursday is one of the grandest celebrations in Egypt.

5. Thomas Sunday

(The Sunday that follows the Resurrection)

Thomas Sunday falls on the Sunday next to the Resurrection.

Thomas, one of Jesus' disciples, was not present when Jesus visited his disciples after his Resurrection. Being told of the visit, he said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." (John 20:25) Jesus did come back and stood in the midst of his disciples and called upon Thomas to see the print of nails and the wound in his side.

6. The Journey of the Holy Family to Egypt (24 Bashans - 1 June)

St. Matthew records in his gospel the journey made by the Virgin Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus to Egypt to escape Herod, the King, who sought to kill Jesus. The Coptic Sinskar, a book that compiles the biographies of saints, mentions that event as one of the greatest spiritual days in Egypt. The church made a hymn sung by the congregation on that occasion, "Rejoice O Egypt, for he who loves mankind has arrived to your land."

Tradition has it that on Jesus' entry into Egypt, all idols trembled. Pladius, the historian and a fourth century bishop, visited Al-Ashmounin pagan temple where idols collapsed when Jesus entered that town.

The journey of the Holy Family is carefully traced and documented. They entered Egypt from its eastern border, passed by Zagazig to Musturud, Samanud, Al-Borols and Sakha. They moved westward to Wadi Al-Natrun where monasteries were later set up. They then moved to Ein Shams (Heliopolis) where they sat in the shade of a tree made famous by the event. They moved to Masr Al-Qadima and settled in a cave that exists nowadays in St. Sergius Church (Abu Serga). They directed their steps afterwards to Upper Egypt, starting from Ma'adi, where the Church of the Virgin Mary stands nowadays overlooking the Nile. They visited Al-Bahansa, Gabal Al-Tayr near Samalut, Al-Ashmounin, Al-Qusiya, Mir, Gabal Qasqam where a monastery known as Al-Mahraq was later established. It is there, in Gabal Qasqam that the order to return to Palestine, after the death of Herod, was received.

Miracles that the presence of Jesus gave rise to in Egypt are recorded in Omar Bin Kindi's book Fada'el Misr (The Virtues of Egypt) written in the time of the Ikshidis.

7. The Transfiguration

(13 Misra - 19 August)

The feast celebrates the day when Jesus took with him Peter, James and John and brought them up into a high mountain. There, "he was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him." (St. Matthew 17:2)

The Seven Feasts of the Virgin Mary

1. The Annunciation (7 Misra - 13 August).

2. The birth of the Virgin Mary (1 Bashans - 9 May)

3. Her entry into the temple (3 Keyak - 13 December)

4. Her death (21 Tuba - 30 January)

5. The Ascent of her body to Heaven (16 Misra - 22 August)

6. The dedication of the first church in her name in Macedonia (21 Ba'ona -28 June).

7. The appearance of the Virgin in Zaytoun

Coptic Sinikar (Suhag)

(a suburb in Cairo). In the evening of 2 April 1968, the Virgin Mary was seen clad in light between

the domes of the Zaytoun Church. Her appearance recurred until the beginnings of September. Crowds of Christians as well as Muslims came to witness the event and various miracles, documented in books and the newspapers of the time, took place. Pope Kirolos VI ordered the annual celebration of that day.

FEASTS OF THE SAINTS

The Coptic Church assigns to each day of the year the commemoration of a martyr, a saint or one of the prophets of the Old Testament. A record of this calendar of feast in included in the Sinskar.

Banub Abdou suggests the following classification of these feasts:

1. The Coptic New year , "The Martyrs' Calendar" (1 Tut - 11 September).

2. Feasts of Jesus Christ.

3. Feasts of the Virgin Mary.

4. Feasts of the Angels.

5. Feasts of the Prophets of the Old Testament.

6. Feasts of Christ's disciples and apostles.

7. Feasts of Martyrs.

8. Feasts of Patriarchs and Bishops.

9. Feasts of monks, virgins and holy women.

10. Feasts of the end of the year.

The daily mass thus includes a reading from the Sansikar about the celebrated personality. Hymns are sung in praise of his character and deeds so that an example is set for the congregation to follow. Moreover, the chapters read from the Bible on each day are chosen to reflect upon the life of the saint or martyr whose memory is celebrated.

Some of these feasts are celebrated on a wide scale particularly in the places where the celebrated personalities lived or were martyred. Quite often, an old church stands in commemoration of the saint or martyr where crowds flock to receive his blessing. They stay in tents around the church for a few days. Celebrations begin in the eve of the feast and continues throughout the night to the morning of the feast. The celebrations may extend from three to seven days. A special celebration is reserved for the last day. It is 'al-laila al-kabira' (the grand night) during which visitors stay up all night.

Feast days may be celebrated with more than one mass. Processions march inside or outside the church under the icon of the celebrated saint. Such feasts are also characterized by the following features:

1. Visitors stand before the icon of the saint and sing a hymn in praise of his qualities.

2. Visitors who are struck by need or disease call upon the saint to intercede with God on their behalf. Quite often a vow, known as 'nazr' is given whereby a visitor pledges money or sacrifices to be offered to the poor or the church.

3. There is also a popular belief in the power of saints to treat incurable diseases and exorcise evil spirits. Mar Guirguis (St. George) is particularly famous for the possession of such powers.

4. Means of entertainment are offered in such feasts. Cafes, shops and foodstalls are set up. Special stalls sell souvenirs and sweets that visitors buy and offer as gifts on their return. Such is the importance of gifts that a proverb links success with the buying of 'homos' (chick pea) and disapproves of he "who returns from the maulid without chick peas or empty handed". It is evident that this last feature is common in both Christian and Muslim celebrations.

The following are examples of some saints' feasts:

The Feast of Mar Mina

St. Mina, or Mar Mina (Mar being a syriac word meaning master) was born in Mariout in the third century A.D. He was a soldier in the roman army but left the military service to become a monk. He was martyred in the reign of Decladianus and buried in his native town. Beside his tomb, there used to exist a spring whose water cured diseases. Pilgrims flocked to that spring and treasured the water of the



Mural painting from wadiel natroun.

Feast days may be celebrated with more than one mass. Processions march inside or outside the church under the icon of the celebrated saint. Such feasts are also characterized by the following features:

1. Visitors stand before the icon of the saint and sing a hymn in praise of his qualities.

2. Visitors who are struck by need or disease call upon the saint to intercede with God on their behalf. Quite often a vow, known as 'nazr' is given whereby a visitor pledges money or sacrifices to be offered to the poor or the church.

3. There is also a popular belief in the power of saints to treat incurable diseases and exorcise evil spirits. Mar Guirguis (St. George) is particularly famous for the possession of such powers.

4. Means of entertainment are offered in such feasts. Cafes, shops and foodstalls are set up. Special stalls sell souvenirs and sweets that visitors buy and offer as gifts on their return. Such is the importance of gifts that a proverb links success with the buying of 'homos' (chick pea) and disapproves of he "who returns from the maulid without chick peas or empty handed". It is evident that this last feature is common in both Christian and Muslim celebrations.

The following are examples of some saints' feasts:

The Feast of Mar Mina

St. Mina, or Mar Mina (Mar being a syriac word meaning master) was born in Mariout in the third century A.D. He was a soldier in the roman army but left the military service to become a monk. He was martyred in the reign of Decladianus and buried in his native town. Beside his tomb, there used to exist a spring whose water cured diseases. Pilgrims flocked to that spring and treasured the water of the spring in pots bearing the image of Mar Mina before their return to their countries. Remains of these pots were found throughout The Roman Empire. A grand cathedral was built at the site of the saint's tomb and was dedicated by Pope Athnasius on 15 Ba'una in the fourth century. A big church was built next to the cathedral as numbers of visitors increased.

Mar Mina's church has been for centuries a famous pilgrimage site in Egypt. Pilgrims to Jerusalem paid it a visit on their way back home. In the twentieth century excavations uncovered ancient relics. Mar Mina Society was founded in Alexandria and visits to the sites still go on particularly on 15 Ba'una (his birthday), and 15 Hatour (his martyrdom). Pope Kirolos VI founded a monastery at the site on 27 November 1959. It is visited by many people throughout the year.

St. Demyana (Sitt Gemyana) at Belqas

The church of St. Demyana lies in the Barari monastery in what was known as Sisban valley to the north of Balqas, Dakahliya Governorate.

St. Demyana was martyred together with Morcos, her father, who was governor of the region and forty girls of her friends. The church, where they were buried, was dedicated on 12 Bashans (20 May) in the fourth century.

A week before that date, white tents where visitors reside, are set up. It is believed that white pigeons fly out of St. Demyana's church during that week.

Mar Guirgis (St. George) at Mit Damsis

According to the Sinskar, Mar Guirgis was born in the year 280 A.D. He was an officer in the Roman army and was martyred in 303 A.D. during the reign of Decladianus. His martyrdom is commemorated at Mit Damsis, ten kilometers north to Mit Ghamr on the Damietta Branch of the Nile. A monastery used to stand in that site. There is a popular story related to the building of Mar Guirgis Church on that site. It is said that a boat sailing from Jerusalem was stuck in the river bank beside the site

tion era, they declared their Christian faith and gave up their riches to the poor. They were so popular that they converted many people to Christianity. Consequently, they were tortured and deported to Alexandria so that they would not influence other people.

Despite their persecution in Alexandria, Sitt Rifqa supported her sons until they were all martyred. They were buried in Sonbat and a church was founded in their honour. Their feast is celebrated on 7 Tut (17 September).

MARRIAGE RITES AND CEREMONIES

BY Dr. MERVAT AL- ASHMAW



This paper deals with "marriage rites and ceremonies," including popular customs related to marriage and the engagement celebration. It covers the procedures which start with a choice of a husband based on his personal qualities and social status, celebration ceremonies involving related social and cultural symbols that serve for publicising the event, the engagement ring seen from an ecological perspective, reciting the fatiha (the opening sura in the Holy Quran), and finalising the marriage contract in accordance with the social and religious aspects of its public announcement so that it would have a full legal and religious significance.

Celebrations of the 'henna' evening as well as the wedding are also presented together with related alimentary traditions and symbols. Economic factors are also dealt with; these include the dowry, the gifts given by the bridegroom to his bride, 'al-'nuqut' (money gifts) and marriage gifts. The house of the newlywed is examined in relation to the nature of their economic activities. Finally, biological symbols relevant to marriage are presented side by side with magical practice and symbols.

Ethnographic material was drawn from Al-Borg village, which lies at a distance of 10 km.



The wedding ceremony

north to Rosetta, to represent as a whole marriage rites and ceremonies in other Egyptian villages.

ENGAGEMENT

The engagement is the period that precedes marriage representing a preliminary stage where relationships between the two families of the bride and the groom may be strengthened and the foundation of marriage may be established. It is a period in which the bride and the groom become better acquainted before marriage. It is also a revealing period in which the claims of the groom are tested. It often happens that certain grooms lie about their circumstances, particularly the financial side; hence apprehensive feelings and mutual reservation and even distrust may dominate the relationship between the two families. This may lead to the breaking of the engagement leaving both parties with no strings attached. Both parties are also free from any legal commitments once the truth is uncovered concerning matters that render marriage impossible.

Engagement paves the way to marriage in a sense that the groom seriously receives knowledge and information that qualifies him for the married state. All those concerned, on both sides, share in the preparations and commitments for marriage.

The groom to be works hard to impress his in-laws and to share with his father the expenses of the marriage or to build a house next to his father's, and also to provide presents to the bride on certain religious occasions. He spends less time in cafes, and abstains from dancing at the weddings of his friends, going by the saying, "whoever dances, belittles himself". Thus, his position may be strengthened with his peers and his in-laws.

Girls who reach the age of marriage are instructed by their mothers in whatever house chores they may have not undertaken before. They may be considered as guests in the house and though they may not be over burdened with household chores, they are expected to undertake certain duties such as working in the field with their cousins and neighbours and fulfilling their social obligations towards their family. They may also take part in baking bread with other girls.

Choice of a spouse is a preliminary stage for an engagement to take place. This choice depends on two questions: who makes the choice ? and who is chosen ? Making marriage choices in rural communities is the responsibility of parents as rural families are closely related as neighbours or in-laws. Women also pay frequent visits to one another to help in bread baking and basket making from palm leaves. Young men, particularly those who work alongside their parents in agriculture, usually give in if their parents insist on choosing their brides for them. However, young men are not barred from expressing their preferences; they usually confide in their mothers or elder sisters their wishes in that respect. Economic independence and some financial resource other than agriculture, (working in Gulf countries, commerce, or driving) undoubtedly offers young men a greater chance to choose their brides.

But if parents persist in their rejection of their son's choice, he most probably gives in to their decision.

MOTIVES THAT GOVERN THE MARRIAGE CHOICE

Individual preferences govern the marriage choice. Money, influence, prestige, social status, culture, moral considerations may play a role in the making of that decision as well as the beauty and youth of the bride. However, rural families seek to marry their sons and daughters into families of the same level of wealth as economic factors always have precedence in the choice of a groom or a bride.

In Al-Borg village, brides need to master certain skills to be eligible for marriage. These

are household chores such as baking, cooking, basket-making, fetching water, as well as the ability to supervise agricultural workers in the rare event of the absence of the breadwinner of the family. They are also expected to be familiar with certain agricultural tasks such as fruit and vegetable packaging, irrigation, and spraying insecticides. It is to be noted that outdoor activities should be carried out with the utmost decency.

The bride should also come from a house reputed for good and upright behaviour . Her parents should not be inclined towards trouble-making. This information is common knowledge in villages because of the close relations between families.

As for the mother of the bride, she needs be a quiet, able woman who does not mix much with other people. Other qualities that do her credit is her being economical and honest in handling her husband's money. Physical features such as obesity and beauty also count; as the proverb goes, "Get married to a beautiful girl and sit in front of her. If you get hungry, eat from her beauty."

The recommended qualities of the groom include good behaviour, coming from a respectable family and maintaining good relationships with his neighbours. A balanced and quiet character together with perseverance are also sought for. These qualities should also apply to his mother and sisters with whom the bride will engage closely after marriage.

THE SUITABLE AGE FOR ENGAGEMENT

It is common for girls in rural communities to marry at an early age. The suitable age for engagement for a girl is related to the physiological changes she undergoes during puberty. Adolescent girls may be engaged at the age of fourteen and married at the age of sixteen.

Guarding the honour of a girl lies behind early engagement and marriage. Other reasons include giving her enough time span to give birth to many children who will grow up while she is still young. Girls may also be married before the minimum legal age but only after an age certificate is issued to them.

The engagement age for young men is around twenty depending on their financial means that are indispensable for meeting the demands of engagement and marriage. Completion of military service also frees them to start a new life.

A type of internal marriage prevails in the Egyptian villages. It is an inter-family marriage that brings together paternal or maternal cousins. Maintaining the wealth of the family and guaranteeing family purity encourage such type of marriage. A much quoted proverb is "Knives of relatives are blunt ...". However, extra-family marriages do exist and proverbs that support that practice say "The smoke of relatives is blinding", or "relatives are scorpions".

Reciting al-fatiha (the opening sura of the Quran) precedes the engagement arrangements. The groom pays a visit to the parent of his bride-to-be accompanied by his father, elder brother, two of his uncles (on the paternal and maternal sides), his mother and his elder sister. They bring gifts of fruits and sweets to their hosts. As soon as the bride-to-be appears carrying a tray of sherbet, the groom and his father put some money on the tray as a symbolic gesture of welcome towards her and of admiration on the part of the groom. The girl then retires while only the men get together to recite al-fatiha, specify the value of 'al-mahr' (a gift of money given by the groom to his bride), 'al-shabka' (a piece of jewellery presented by the groom to his bride), as well as fix a tentative date for the wedding ceremony. This get together is known as "meeting of men" signifying honour-bound commitment. Dinner is then offered to the groom's family particularly if they come from neighbouring villages.

The engagement ceremony reflects social and family ties as the two families send invitations to their relatives, friends and neighbours to attend this ceremony. The groom is responsible for setting up decorations and loud speakers in both his house and the bride's. On the engagement day, the groom, accompanied by friends, paternally related relatives and the eldest and highly respected members of his family, goes to the bride's house on Thursday evening or after the Friday prayers. The 'shabka' (the jewellery the groom buys his bride) is shown to all present by his mother or elder sister. Then , he or his mother puts the ring on the finger of the bride.

On that day, 'al-mashta' (a lady's beauty specialist) pays a visit to the bride's house. The bride receives a beauty treatment for the first time in her life. Her face is made up, unwanted hair is removed. It is a symbolic procedure heralding her access to womanhood.

The groom is responsible for buying his bride, beside 'al-shabka', other items including her engagement dress, shoes and purse. After buying these gifts, he sends them with his mother or elder sister to his bride.

THE ENGAGEMENT RING OR AL- SHABKA

The engagement ring or 'al-shabka' symbolises the position that is newly occupied by the bride who wears it. The more expensive it is, the more the choice of the groom is justified. The value of the ring reflects positively on the bride's ability to win the heart of a rich man.

The value of the 'shabka' depends on the economic position of the groom's family. It may be a set of jewellery (a bracelet, a ring, a pair of earrings and a chain), or a couple of bracelets or just a ring and a wrist watch in the case of a groom of limited means.

The groom's parents buy 'al-shabka', sometimes accompanied by the bride's mother. The father of the groom gets an invoice to present to the bride's family.

However, peasants are not keen on putting on rings because of the nature of their work in the fields and the tools they use, and their performance of other chores such as basket-making and bread-baking. Consequently, the bride and groom only wear their rings during the engagement period and take them off once they are married. They may even sell them, if in need of money.

THE MARRAIGE CONTRACT

Married life officially begins with signing the marriage contract. In rural societies, the contract is signed shortly before the wedding (within a week up to two months). This arrangement is meant to preempt any conditions or restrictions imposed by the groom on his wife while still in her father's house. She is then able to carry on with her social and economic responsibilities towards her family. Such customs play an important role in social control.

In most cases, the signing of the marriage contract takes place in the bride's house. The celebration may either be as limited as was the case in the engagement ceremony or it may be on a grand scale that is similar to the wedding party that is yet to come.

Family and social solidarity appears in the presence of the male members of both families, the uncles and cousins in particular. There are two witnesses to the contract, one from the groom's family, the other from the bride's. On this occasion, the bride puts on the engagement dress or any other dress suitable for the occasion. The bride stays in another room accompanied by female members of both families. The signing of the contract does not require her presence as it is signed by proxy. The 'ma'zoun' (the marriage contract official) is paid an agreed sum of money, he also charges a percentage of 'al-mahr' as recorded in the marriage contract. He may be invited to lunch and dinner and offered sweets. The contract signed, sherbet and sweets are offered to those present.

THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Preparations for the wedding ceremony begin on the evening before. In rural communities, that evening is known as al-henna evening (the evening when decorative patterns are drawn with a paste of herbal composition on parts of the bride's body). Celebrations start on that day since early morning. Songs are heard through loud-speakers, decorations and a wedding make-shift hall are set up in front of the groom's house. After the last prayers of the day, the groom's friends pay him a visit. There, they dance and sing until late at night. The groom's mother or an elderly lady prepares al-'henna' and puts lit candles around it. During that day, food and soft drinks are offered to all present. Relatives and friends sleep over in the house as a sign of solidarity. Also, female members of the family get together to cook meals for all.

On that evening, the bride's mother or else her grandmother prepares halawa paste (a hair-removing paste). The bride then removes, with the help of her sisters or an elderly lady, unwanted hair from the armpits and the pubic area. 'Al-mashta' arrives to prepare 'al-henna' and to brief the bride on intimate details of married life: the first sexual encounter, breaking the hymen and the religious rites of ablution that follows intercourse. 'Al-mashta' advises the bride not to fear so as to allow the first encounter to be easily and successfully accomplished. That night, the bride puts on her old clothes. All these ceremonies, as is the case in traditional societies, are meant to announce the change to a new married life.

Marriage celebrations start early next morning. The mother of the groom receives well wishers who come to congratulate the groom and present their 'nuqut' (a gift of money). Solidarity features in the getting together of paternal and maternal aunts to cook, refill water vessels and prepare meals for the guests. Marriage invitations insist that guests arrive at noon for lunch while the celebration takes place later in the evening. Young girls get together in the house hall to sing and dance. Men stay in the nasba(make-shift hall) set up outside the house to offer their congratulations and present their 'nuqut' announced through loudspeakers.

The groom dons his wedding clothes at one of his friends' or at his maternal cousins' houses away from his own house. One of the groom's friends or cousins invites him to lunch and the barber arrives to give the groom a shave and a hair cut. The groom takes a bath, puts on his wedding clothes and gets ready for 'al-zaffa' (the wedding procession). In the bride's house, the women of the family get together to prepare food. 'Al-mashta' arrives in the afternoon for the make-up of the bride. The groom's eldest sister or his aunt arrives at the bride's house to receive him. When he arrives, the groom salutes all those present and leads his bride and the members of her family in a wedding procession, preceded by a folk troupe of singers and dancers, to his house. The procession goes on foot if the house of the groom is nearby or else in carriages. A number of singers is usually hired to perform at the wedding celebration. A little before the end of the party, the groom leads his bride on to his house, leaves her and comes back to stay with his friends a short while not longer than twenty minutes. They congratulate him and give him 'nuqut'.

DOUBLE STANDARDS

Double standards feature in some rural customs related to marriage. Contact with city life is at the base of these double standards. Internal and external factors bring about change in the culture of any community. Invention, prevalence and borrowing are the three main sources for change. Generally speaking, a change in culture takes place through a re-arrangement of its components into new patterns. Old components may fade out but in most cases the old survive alongside the new.

'Al-henna' is a case in point. A good number

of grooms refuse to use it. They claim that they are no longer backward peasants and in some cases they settle only for applying 'henna' on their heels where it would not be seen.

However, 'al-mashta' paints the feet and hands of the bride with al-'henna'. The painted patterns are exposed to an air current from a fan or left to dry in open air. This is known as 'al-tabat wa al-nabat' pattern (stability and fertility pattern). it is thought that it would make the bride give birth to boys and girls. Sometimes, only a dot of 'henna' is painted on the palm of the bride as a good omen. This practice breaks with the old tradition of elaborate painting of hands and feet.

The latest style, however, is the painting of the bride's finger nails. Full 'henna' paint is reserved for children.

These double standards feature also in the groom's choice of his wedding clothes. Many grooms prefer donning a wedding suit whereas some insist on their 'galabeyas'.

The type of 'zaffa' is also determined in the light of these double standards. A 'baladi' (folk) zaffa is performed by the groom's friends with the accompaniment of 'baladi' drums. The procession leads to the bride's house where she is accompanied by her groom to his family's house. It is there that a more modernised wedding party takes place.

The second type is the traditional 'dawra' (circular zaffa). The groom proceeds surrounded by two young men carrying flowers. Other young men go round the groom dancing to the beat of drums. A friend of the groom follows with a chair for the groom to sit on from time to time for a rest. Occasionally, couples engage in folk games such as 'al-tahtib' (fencing). If the procession happens to pass by a cafe, the proprietor presents drinks to everyone. Among the young men taking part in the procession, there is one responsible for taking down 'al-nuqut' presented to the groom. This dawra takes two hours before reaching the bride's house.

THE SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE OF FOODS

Most families slaughter a cow or a buffalo on the wedding day. Well-to-do families slaughter more than one animal (a number of calves or sheep) and hire a cook to barbecue the meat and prepare lunch and dinner for guests on 'al-henna' evening and on the wedding day. The women of the house (the groom's mother, her sisters, aunts, and nieces) help in the preparation of vegetables to be presented with the meat.

The bride's mother is keen on preparing the newly-wed's dinner known as biram 'al-ittifaq or al-wifaq' (the pot of harmony). This biram consists mainly of pigeons, ducks or chicken stuffed with rice and richly cooked with ghee. Rice symbolises fertility, and having this meal also signifies harmony between the couple and the ability of the groom to break his bride's hymen, hence the richness of the meal. This dinner is sent with one of the little girls on a tray during 'al-zaffa'.

Cakes are also prepared by the bride's mother or her sisters and sent to the bride on 'al-sabahiyya' (the morning following the wedding) or on al-subu' (a week after the marriage). The groom's family make a point of visiting them for lunch in which barbecued meat, chicken and vegetables are presented.

The bride's mother-in-law prepares 'al-sabahiyya' breakfast for the couple especially if she lives in the same house. This meal consists of honey, cakes, butter, cheese and sometimes meat and chicken, are added.

PECUNIARY FACTORS RELATED TO MARRIAGE

'Al-Mahr' is one of the pecuniary symbols related to marriage; it is also known as bride price and refers to the gifts, commodities and

money presented by the groom's relatives. 'Al-mahr' is one of the more common means of wealth exchange.

The most suitable time of the year for paying 'al-mahr' is in September, October and November. These months represent harvest time when money is available. The newly-wed are able then to prepare their house and consummate their marriage. The father of the bride is responsible for buying the furniture of the house in accordance with the number of rooms in the groom's house or his family's. The bedroom is an essential part of the furnishings, as well as the dining room and the drawing room if there is enough space in the house. 'Al-nawa'im' (which refers to china, pots and pans, upholstery) are part of the bride's furnishings. The father of the bride also buys his daughter some gold jewellery.

'Al-mahr' is looked upon as the groom's contribution to the costs of marriage and as a compensation for the chores and social responsibilities the bride used to perform during her childhood and adolescence. The groom receives the help of his father and his paternal relatives in paying 'al-mahr'. It is widely common however that the father of the groom pays 'al-mahr'. The groom's father, accompanied by his eldest son and one of his brothers, pays a visit to the father of the bride, to pay 'al-mahr' and set the date for the marriage. The bride's family, in a show of solidarity, convenes on this occasion. Uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters get together to receive the groom's family.

Additional conditions for the marriage to take place may be added when the father of the groom pays his visit to the bride's family to set the date of the marriage. These conditions are known as the bride's dinner, the conditions or al-tamhika. These conditions, in money or in kind, are imposed by the bride's father. They may include the price of the bride's wedding dress, upholstery expenses, or transfer of the furniture. Bargaining takes place and attempts are made to convince the bride's father of flexibility. Exaggerated demands may cancel the wedding arrangements altogether.

Gifts presented by the groom to his bride on religious occasions and feasts represent another side of the pecuniary arrangements in marriage. These occasions occur in the hijri months of Ragab, Sha'ban, Ramadan, the Prophet's birthday and the greater and lesser Bairams. Harvest time also calls for gifts to be presented to the bride. On the Prophet's birthday, the groom makes a point of buying 'Arus al-mouled' (a doll made of sugar) to his bride. The groom, accompanied by his mother or eldest sister pay a visit to the bride's family and they stay for dinner. The price of a gift may exceed one hundred Egyptian pounds. Expensive gifts reflect favourably upon the groom's generosity, social prestige and his admiration for his bride. Gifts are also potential indicators to a groom's future role as the bread-winner of the family

'Al-nuqut' is looked upon as gifts that require repayment. Accepting 'nuqut' thus necessitates paying it back in cash or in kind. Failure to repay 'al-nuqut' brings about shame on the debtor and weakens his social prestige.

Close relatives and neighours present their 'nuqut' to the mother of the groom or the bride on occasions such as engagement, signing the marriage contract, preparing the furnishing, al-'henna' evening and the wedding day. They stay for lunch which consists of barbecued meat with bread. They can take their lunch home if they do not eat it there and then. A trustworthy girl writes down the value of 'al-nuqut' presented in a special notebook as a reminder for paying it back.

'Nuqut' is also given to the bride by her paternal and maternal relatives as well as relatives of her groom after al-shabka or the signing of the contract, the morning after the wedding and on the seventh day. The bride has to present some gifts to whoever present her with 'nuqut'. These gifts may be handkerchiefs for men and scarves or perfume as a gesture of

gratitude. 'Nuqut' is also given to the groom's father on the occasion of the engagement of his son, signing the contract, al-'henna' evening and the wedding day. Relatives and neighbours present their 'nuqut' from noon till night fall on the wedding day. They then go to the house of the groom's father. The house is divided into two sections: one for men, the other for women. Or they may go to the make-shift hall set up in front of the house where food is served to men. A close friend or relative sits beside the father of the groom who hands over 'al-nuqut'. 'Al-nuqut' is also given to the groom by his relatives and friends on the occasion of his engagement, the signing of the contract, 'al-henna' evening and the wedding day. A friend or relative of the groom records the sums of 'al-nuqut'. 'Al-nuqut' is also announced through loud-speakers set up in front of his house. It is also given by friends when the groom dresses up for his wedding at one of his friends' houses or while he is getting his hair cut, after the wedding party is over, the morning after, and the seventh day after the wedding.

Apart from 'al-nuqut', the presentation of wedding gifts with no obligation for repayment is a well-established tradition. It springs from a commitment to offer help and is dependent on the position or wealth of the presenter.

This type of gifts applies to the 'nuqut' between brothers and sisters on the occasion of the marriage of their children, and also to gifts in kind presented by paternal relatives and neighbours such as sacks of potato, rice, sugar, tea and bottles of sherbet.

The groom is held responsible for providing the marital home. It is often his family's house where a room or two are set apart for his use. A separate flat may be built on top of the family house or on a nearby piece of land. This arrangement is in keeping with the customs of religious families preferred in rural communities.

Children who do not work in agriculture may also reside in the same house until they become independent. This reflects the extent of social solidarity in rural communities.

The father of the bride is under obligation to buy furnishing proportionate to the value of 'al-mahr', his social position and the number of rooms available.

If a bride lives with her husband's family, she makes a point of taking part in the housework as early as the morning after the wedding to avoid disputes with her groom's family. She leaves her room in the morning, greets her husband's family in an attempt to win their love. She undertakes a few simple chores such as preparing food for her husband and his relatives and guests who come to present 'al-nuqut'. It is only after a week that she shares fully in baking, cooking, washing, cleaning the stable and other household chores. But there are certain duties that she cannot perform before forty days elapse for fear she would be exposed to the danger of the evil eye. These include hanging out the washing, and fetching water from the pump or river.

The bride does not step outside her house except on few occasions. She does not visit her father's house until nine months elapse. However, if the need arises for her help in the field because of her husband's absence, or because he has no brothers or because of the inferior economic conditions of his family, she may only do that after twelve or eighteen months of marriage so as to avoid being the butt of society's criticism.

BIOLOGICAL SYMBOLS RELATED TO MARRIAGE

As the essential function of marriage is perpetuating the human race, marriage ceremonies tend to uphold this function. Marriage is meant to be fruitful and the bride's virginity is essential. Chastity is underscored in many cultures. It is akin to religion in Islamic, Christian and Jewish cultures.

A girl's virginity is an important value. That is why the groom undertakes to break his bride's virginity all on his own without help from female members of either his or her family. Breaking the hymen is proof of his man-

hood as well as an assurance of his bride's virginity. The bride keeps the towel or cloth that carries the virginity blood and treasures it as a symbol of her honour. This piece of cloth may also be used for therapeutic purposes. A bride may use it in her bath three consecutive Fridays if exposed to the evil eye. It is also kept until the birth of the first child. Some brides keep it for life as marriage may break up and the new husband may need proof of her honour and uprightness.

The mother of the bride brings the newly-wed some gifts in kind the morning after the wedding. These include sugar, fruit, meat and cakes. She would also wish to assure herself of her daughter's honour and she takes the towel to the paternal relatives of the bride so that they may revel in her honour. She then returns it to her.

The father rarely goes to his daughter on that day. He usually goes on the seventh day and gives her a gift of money in expression of his happiness at her upholding her honour and that of her family. This gift of money is a source of pride for the bride in relation to the groom's family.

Fertility rites exist. Grain is thrown all over the bride and groom, fruit is placed round their bed, prayers and sacrifices of animals are offered on the wedding day. Most brides and grooms enter their houses with the right foot. They may also pray God to grant them a happily married life and give them good children. Rice is thrown on them during al-zaffa as it symbolises fertility. Water is also sprinkled upon them on entering their house as a good omen.

MAGIC AND MARRIAGE

Bach notes that a belief exits in the growing dangers of evil on passing from one stage of life to another, in birth, marriage, death and even in the changing of seasons.

Fear of the evil eye is prevalent. It is a belief that consists in the ability of certain people to inflict harm on others whether intentionally or not.

Magic, on the other hand, is the belief that supernatural powers may be used for particular purposes. These may be good such as a plenteous harvest, an abundant catch of fish, fertility of farm animals, or the treatment or protection against disease. Bad purposes include bringing harm and disease on others. This is known as black magic.

Inhabitants of rural communities resort to various means to ward off these evils. The bride and groom wear their underwear upside down. Salt is thrown on them. Fire arms are shot during the wedding procession. Incense is burnt during the wedding party. Both the bride and groom make a point of having their baths at a friend's or a relative's house. Tap water rather than water fetched in vessels is used. They thus avoid running the risk of using water that might have been tampered with. They often wear a piece of fisherman's net around their waists during the signing of the contract and 'al-zaffa' to ward off magic that is believed to bring impotence upon the groom. Magic charms are also kept in their pockets to protect them from the dangers of magic. The staircase is also cleaned with salty water as a protective measure.

The bride's mother puts incense in her daughter's bedroom, a bird is often killed and its blood sprinkled in the house or a nail is driven into one of the walls to foil evil magic. In the wedding procession, the bride and bridegroom follow a roundabout path to avoid stepping on a charm. Windshields made of bamboo are often parted on the way to allow them safe access to their house. The bride's brother, cousin or uncle sometimes carries the bride across the threshold of the house for fear of magic charms. During the signing of the contract an elderly lady places a sieve containing the Holy Quran on the bride's head. A white sheet of paper is then torn into pieces in the sieve representing putting an end to the slander of women. The bride may also immerse her feet in a water basin and put on her head another containing orange or lemon leaves. The mother also makes a point of keeping a part of the 'henna' paste to the morning after the wedding or to the seventh day. This is presented as a good omen to the bride. The mother also leaves a print out of her hand, painted with 'henna', on the door or walls of the house, to ward off the evil eye.



Acknowlegements

The Encyclopaedia of Folk Arts Committee expresses her gratitude to the Egyptian Geographical Society, the Folk Arts Centre in Cairo, the Luxor Museum for Egyptian Monuments,and all those who have participated in facilitating our task in the publication of this book.

